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One of America's best-loved travel destinations, Charleston's got it all: spectacular dining, rich culture, a charming downtown, and hundreds of years of history. Yet the city is constantly reinventing itself with fresh new boutiques, innovative restaurant concepts, and uncovered stories you haven't heard before. Start planning your next trip to Charleston and discover what's new and what's next in this beloved Southern jewel.



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Ideally situated on the corner of King Street and historic Marion Square, Hotel Bennett is the city's newest, and some say grandest, luxury hotel. Featuring 179 gorgeous guest rooms and suites, a signature restaurant, sumptuous spa, and spectacular rooftop pool, the hotel has everything you need for a pampered getaway.



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A stunning oceanfront hotel and spa just 21 miles from Charleston, The Sanctuary at Kiawah Island Golf Resort offers an idyllic escape. Dive in and cool off at two spectacular pool complexes, be pampered at the award-winning spa, and indulge at more than a dozen restaurants, cafés, and eateries.



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Deftly combining Jazz Age exuberance with the genteel glamour of the Old South, The Spectator Hotel is Charleston at its best—and it's situated in the heart of the vibrant historic district. Check in and enjoy all-inclusive luxury amenities such as butler service, concierge service, valet parking, and bicycles to borrow.

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Inspired Storefronts

With historic shops that have been around for more than a century and innovative new boutiques that are transforming traditional retail, Charleston's shopping scene is overflowing with locally owned, one-of-a-kind storefronts.

Head to historic King Street for the city's most charming and diverse roundup of local shops. Here, you'll find the latest men's fashions at local institution **M. Dumas & Sons**, a Lowcountry clothier since 1917. Nearby, **Ibu Movement** hawks a vibrant collection of handmade luxury clothing and accessories created by 101 artisan groups in 38 countries. At **Candlefish**, a passionate group of chandlers (candle makers) have transformed the candle shop experience into an elegant "library" featuring 100 stunning candle scents. And in the Upper King Design District, **Blue Bicycle Books** is a Charleston institution selling used and new books, and hosting more than 200 authors for talks and signings each year.

If you're hoping to add a little shopping to your beach day, Kiawah Island's **Freshfields Village** is an ideal option. Spend an afternoon strolling in the open air and enjoying the relaxed Lowcountry setting as you browse the assortment of shops, restaurants, and spa services.

Hospitality Done Right

Charleston is known the world over for its gracious hospitality, and nowhere is this more evident than in its astounding array of eateries and restaurants.

In the heart of downtown, the seasonally changing, modern-American menu at **Tradd's** garners rave reviews. Grab a seat at the elegant, marble-topped bar or reserve a table in the dining room amid exposed-brick walls and floor-to-ceiling windows. An elegant eatery in the historic James Gregorie House, **The Establishment** has an ocean-centric menu featuring fresh, seasonal seafood sourced from local fishermen. For a new take on the traditional wine bar, try **Josephine**, a cozy hot spot focused on chef-driven, shareable plates complemented by a lengthy wine list. And while you're exploring the Lowcountry, head south to John's Island, where the **Royal Tern** welcomes guests with a carefully crafted menu of seafood, steaks, and an outstanding raw bar.



HIDDEN HISTORY + FRESH CULTURE: Local Perspectives

A Never-ending Story

Charleston's rich history permeates its streets—popping up in neighborhoods, parks, gardens, and buildings in and around the city. National historic sites such as **Charles Towne Landing** and **Fort Sumter** are must-sees, but there is more to the story than these grand sites alone can tell. To immerse yourself in everyday life long ago, try a historic home tour. Just 13 miles from downtown, **Drayton Hall** dates back to 1738 and is the oldest plantation house in America still open to the public. While the mansion at **Boone Hall Plantation and Gardens** is much more modern, the estate was founded in 1681 and remains one of the oldest working farms in the country.

Delve further into the lives of black Americans in the region by joining local historian Alphonso Brown on one of his **Gullah Tours of Charleston**. This two-hour bus tour introduces the language, traditions, and stories of the Gullah people (the Lowcountry's first black inhabitants) and visits sites related to the lives of slaves and slave owners. For a hauntingly beautiful introduction to some of the fascinating figures who have lived and died in Charleston, reserve a spot on one of the **Spirits of Magnolia Cemetery** tours. These ghostly evening tours wander amidst the gravesites of authors, poets, politicians, socialites, and more than 2,000 Confederate soldiers who were laid to rest here.

Innovation in the Arts

Home to an impressive collection of galleries, museums, theaters, and art institutions, Charleston's cultural scene is one of the city's star attractions. For a look at what's new in the art world, visit the **City Gallery at Waterfront Park**, an innovative venue that presents ever-changing contemporary art exhibitions and strives to feature local artists and subjects. The **Gibbes Museum of Art**, one of the oldest arts organizations in the country, also maintains a city-centric vision, displaying works that portray Charleston's rich and diverse history in its beautiful Beaux-Arts building situated in the heart of the historic district. For a more global view, the **Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art** hosts five to seven exhibits per year that highlight emerging artists from around the world. And if your timing happens to be right, **2nd Sunday on King Street** is a fun day to explore downtown's premier galleries.



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in Zambia's South
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Park (page 168).

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World's Best Awards 2019

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- 176 **SPIRIT IN THE SKY** Could Bhutan be Asia's next wellness center? A new holistic resort in the Neyphu Valley is leading the charge.

Your Best Shot

- 184 Reader Monica Amariz Cuello photographs the rocky beauty of Italy's Amalfi Coast from a sea cave.

ON THE COVER

Subscriber: The Leela Palace Udaipur, in India (page 69). Photograph by Sivan Askayo. Newsstand: The coast of Anguilla (page 69). Photograph by Christina Holmes.



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CONTRIBUTORS

1. *Jeff Chu*
ON THE SLOW ROAD IN
WEST MICHIGAN (P. 42)
- The New Jersey-based writer has traveled from the colonial streets of Puebla, Mexico, to the windswept coast of Cornwall, England, for T+L. His most recent story took him on a weeklong jaunt to West Michigan. "The region has a gentle, inviting spirit," he says. "And it will feed you very well." Case in point: he found a restaurant whose fried chicken was so delicious, he ate there twice.

2. *Lillian Li*
ALL EYES ON D.C. (P. 162)
- Despite growing up just outside the nation's capital, the Ann Arbor-based author and journalist had never gotten to explore D.C. very much. Even so, when she returned this spring,

she couldn't help noticing the "totality of the city's face-lift." That hasn't changed what makes the city great, she says: "It's truly a unique, diverse, and international place."

3. *Alex Crétey Systemans*
THE LAND OF MYTHICAL
CREATURES (P. 168)
- The Parisian photographer had been on game drives in Kenya and Botswana, but nothing had ever made his pulse race like the wildlife viewing in Zambia. The difference? "Being on a walking safari, as opposed to inside a vehicle, made me feel vulnerable in a way that was exhilarating." For bush photography, Systemans is quick to extol the virtues of a monopod. "It's lighter than a tripod, so it's better for those hot days when you have heavy gear."

4. *Mackenzie Stroh*
ALL EYES ON D.C.
- The Brooklyn-based photographer, whose work can also be found in the pages of *The Wall Street Journal*, has been traveling to D.C. on assignment for the past 16 years. But the capital's new dynamism didn't sink in until her last trip. "People imagine D.C. as a city of politicians, government workers, and museums," she notes. "But it has so much more to offer."

5. *Christina Holmes*
BEST ISLAND IN THE CARIBBEAN,
2019 WORLD'S BEST AWARDS
(P. 69)
- In this year's World's Best Awards, T+L readers voted Anguilla as their favorite island in the Caribbean. When she visited, the Manhattan-based photographer, who captured the island for our newsstand cover, found out why. "You truly get a feeling of escape and solitude," she says. Her tip for first-timers: order the saltfish—a regional speciality—for breakfast.

6. *Jim Lewis*
THE MOST PEACEFUL PLACE
IN TOWN (P. 62)
- Graveyards may not be the most typical tourist destination, but the Texan novelist swears that wandering them is one of the best ways to pull back the curtain on a city. "They show you a side of a place that residents usually keep for themselves," he says. "They're a primer on how residents measure time, formalize grief and loss, and judge their own place in the universe."



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Operation Vacation

At *Travel + Leisure*, we want every American to join us in committing to use up all our vacation days this year. So we created Operation Vacation, a program of exclusive travel deals designed to inspire your next trip. Whatever experience you're looking for, you'll find dozens of terrific discounts on flights, hotels, cruises, and vacation packages at [travelandleisure.com/operation-vacation](https://www.travelandleisure.com/operation-vacation). Here are two of this month's highlights.

▲ *Prospect House, in Tasmania, recently reopened after a \$5 million renovation.*

▼ *The sandstone gorges of Wadi Rum, a stop on Crooked Compass's Jordan Rediscovered tour.*



1.

Prospect House, Tasmania

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Located in the Hobart suburb of Richmond Village, this 12-room boutique hotel in a 189-year-old manor is an ideal base from which to explore the surrounding Coal River Valley wine country.

DETAILS: 32 percent off stays of two nights or longer through December 1. Offer includes two nights in a king room and daily breakfast and dinner. Doubles from \$498 per night; book online using the code [tastravel&leisure](https://www.travelandleisure.com/operation-vacation) at prospecthouseprivatehotel.com.au.

2.

Crooked Compass, Jordan

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See the ancient kingdom with Crooked Compass's 10-day Jordan Rediscovered small-group tour, which includes an excursion to Petra, a visit to the Dead Sea, and a hike along the Wadi Dana Trail.

DETAILS: 30 percent off a 10-day tour (from \$3,178 per person) when booked by August 31 for 2019 and 2020 travel. Offer includes nine nights' accommodation, entrance fees, an English-speaking guide, and airport transfers. Mention code TL30 at time of booking at crooked-compass.com/tour/jordan-rediscovered. Deposit required.

See You in Venice!

Our sister publication, *Food & Wine*, has teamed up with JW Marriott to host Gather, a JW Epicurean & Mindful Experience, at JW Marriott Venice Resort & Spa, September 26–29. The four-day retreat includes events with chefs Giada De Laurentiis and Jonathan Waxman. Book at gatherbyjw.com.



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LETTER *from the Editor*



The world's tallest indoor waterfall, at Singapore's new Jewel Changi Airport shopping and retail complex. Far left: Jacqui at the Dewberry, in Charleston.



FROM MY TRAVELS

This past month, I traveled some 30,000 miles, starting with a quick trip to World's Best Award-winning city Charleston, South Carolina, where I had drinks at the **Dewberry** (thedewberrycharleston.com; from \$350). I also journeyed to London, Paris, and Singapore. My hotel in London was the **Savoy** (thesavoylondon.com; doubles from \$610), a classic that has aged beautifully. I love their new "book butlers," who are meant to encourage digital detoxing. Reserve one of the Thames-facing suites, which have unbeatable views of the river. In Paris, I checked in to the **Lutetia** (hotel-lutetia.com; doubles from \$950), our March cover star. I was blown away by the food and service in the Brasserie, helmed by famed Provençal chef Gérard Passadat. Splurge on the oysters, the sardine toasts with tomato butter, and the whole sea bream flambéed in pastis. In Singapore, I stayed at the **Capella** on Sentosa Island (capellahotels.com; doubles from \$770), which feels worlds away from the humming downtown. I can't stop talking about **Burnt Ends** (ends.com.sg; entrées \$15–\$56): a barbecue-focused Australian restaurant with an open kitchen so you can watch the chefs grilling and smoking meats right before your eyes.

I love to make lists: they keep me sane. At least, they're supposed to. I use them to keep track of the mundane (groceries and prescriptions and bills and plane tickets I need to buy, for the whole family) and the important (work projects, school applications, and the like). I have lists in multiple places—on my personal phone, on my work phone, written down on a memo pad in my kitchen, in a fancy Smythson notebook in the office. (There's a mental list in the mix, too, but that one is always a bit vague.) No sooner do I cross one to-do off a list than another appears, taunting me: *you must accomplish something*.

This issue, which features the World's Best Awards, T+L's annual reader survey of the best in travel around the globe (which starts on page 69), has lists. Lots of them. These are the best kinds of lists, because they inspire rather than taunt—they spark curiosity and make you want to try something new. There's zero pressure to please anyone but yourself.

Our 90 World's Best categories range from Best Hotel in the World (this year's winner, the Leela Palace Udaipur, appears on this issue's subscriber cover) to Best International Airline (congrats, Singapore Airlines, the only honoree to hold No. 1 for all 24 years of the survey's existence). For the first time, Sri Lanka was voted World's Best Island, which I was grateful to see after the Easter Sunday terror attacks. Let's not let this act of violence be a deterrent from visiting this country of such extraordinary warmth, good humor, and natural beauty.

Even before I started working at *Travel + Leisure*, I would pore over the list of winners each August and select a handful of hotels I wanted to experience. I still go through this exercise—not only in August, but year-round, by visiting travelandleisure.com/worlds-best. Now I have added many more places, from J.K. Place Firenze to the Hotel Matilda, in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, to my travel wish list, knowing full well that I won't get to all of them. That's the fun of this kind of list: it never stops growing.

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Travel + Leisure

Discoveries

A GLOBETROTTER'S GUIDE TO THE LATEST IN TRAVEL

Edited by LILA HARRON BATTIS

A Study in Contrasts

In China's Guizhou province, a tech-forward culture rubs shoulders with ancient traditions.

BY ROSS KENNETH URKEN

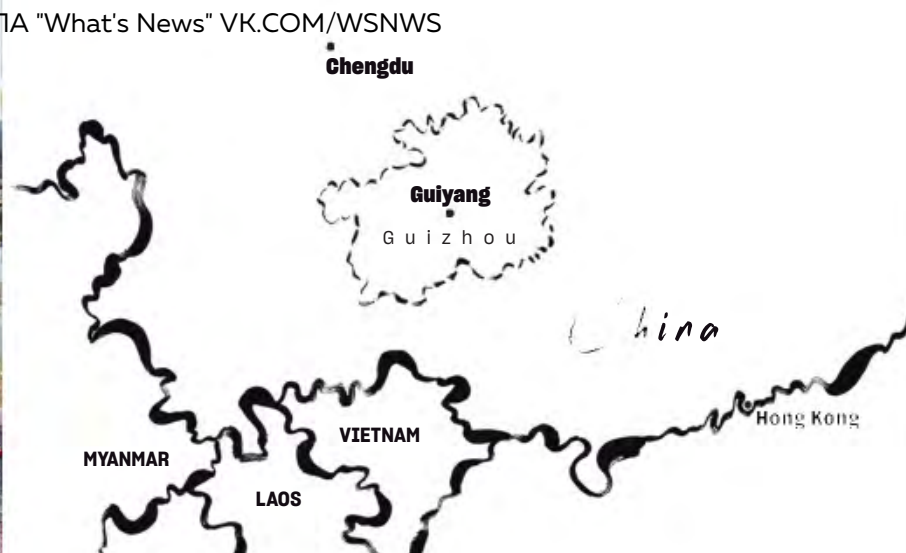
A traditional settlement in Guizhou province.



Guizhou, in rugged southwestern China, has long been one of the nation's least developed provinces. That has allowed minority groups such as the Miao, the Dong, and the Yi to live much as they have for centuries. But recently, the government has been promoting Guizhou's capital, Guiyang, as a tech hub, and companies such as Alibaba, Microsoft, and Huawei are opening offices in town. That's led to better infrastructure, more flights, and expanded high-speed rail service from Guangzhou and Chongqing.

For travelers, Guizhou has become an ideal weekend detour to combine with popular destinations such as Hong Kong or Chengdu, both an easy flight from Guiyang. Even as the region modernizes, it remains a showcase of southern China's centuries-old culture and cuisine. Make the **Hyatt Regency Guiyang** (hyatt.com; doubles from \$130) your base in the capital; in the mountainous countryside, bed down at the humble but comfortable—and, most importantly, English-speaking—**Perenc Hotel** (*Huangguoshu Ave.*;

From top: Miao women celebrate during a festival; a Miao village in eastern Guizhou.



86-851-3351-7777; doubles from \$75) in Anshun. T+L A-List travel advisor Stan Godwyn (stan.g@travelstore.com; 916-830-5511) can book a China itinerary with a visit to Guizhou.

My first stop was the village of Upper Langde, home to the Miao (known elsewhere as the Hmong), one of Guizhou's most prominent ethnic minorities. Bearded men played folk songs on bamboo *lusheng* as women wearing horn-shaped silver headpieces offered me rice wine. In Guizhou, groups like these give visitors a glimpse of traditions that can't be found in China's urban centers.

One misty morning, I visited the **Meitan Tea Ocean** (519 Chahai Rd.; 86-180-8966-6064), the largest expanse of contiguous tea plantations in China, with bushes that extend to the horizon in a patchwork of green velvet. After a tea ceremony, I took in the landscape from my perch high in a pagoda and sipped an earthy brew made with deep red leaves. Later, I drove past rice terraces and limestone karst formations to Huangguoshu Waterfall, the biggest in China, and walked along a winding corridor behind the cascade that's known as the Water-Curtain Cave.

An hour and a half's drive southwest, near the town of Qinglong, is the 24-Zig Road, China's answer to San Francisco's Lombard Street. True to its name, the road slaloms in 24 dramatic bends cut into a mountainside. At the top, I stopped to watch a traveling chorus of singers from a local Yi village, clad in richly embroidered clothing, as they serenaded a small crowd that had gathered.

Back in Guiyang, a notoriously late-night town, I went to karaoke at **Happy World** (7 Dushi Rd.; 86-851-8588-0598) with a Guizhou-born, California-raised friend, whose cousins belted out Mandarin hits as we downed shots of local *baijiu*. Having worked up an appetite, we hit **Shaanxi Road**, a lively drag where food carts sold regional specialties like skewers of fried chicken dipped in sesame oil. As we slurped *suan tang yu*, Guizhou's famous sour fish soup, the tables filled with other revelers. They'd all make it to work by morning, they assured us, and raised their glasses with an enthusiastic "Gan!" If this was China's true soul, I wanted to be a part of it. ✦



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Glory Days Are Here Again

The once-scruffy Jersey beach town of Asbury Park is ready for its next act. **BY NORA WALSH**

The sun is shining again on Asbury Park, the seaside enclave made famous by the Bard of New Jersey, Bruce Springsteen. I grew up nearby, and the memories of my youth are marked by its gritty streets and underground venues, then a stomping ground for mostly locals. In recent years, the city's historic music haunts and iconic boardwalk have gotten a much-needed sprucing up, and now attract visitors from far beyond the tristate area. Hip bars and first-rate restaurants, along with hotels like the three-year-old Asbury and the just-opened Asbury Ocean Club, are transforming this town from a summer getaway into a year-round destination. Here are six can't-miss spots in Jersey's most dynamic music town.

► A guest room at the new Asbury Ocean Club.

▼ The revamped Asbury Lanes.



1. Situated in a gleaming 17-story beachfront tower, the hotel at **ASBURY OCEAN CLUB** is luxe but laid-back, with 54 loft-style guest rooms and glossy communal spaces overlooking a pool deck and the ocean. asburyoceanclub.com; doubles from \$375.

2. Beloved bowling alley **ASBURY LANES**, reborn in 2004 as a music club, has gotten a third life, with six refinished lanes, a retro diner, and an upgraded stage with shows curated by New York City-based promoters the Bowery Presents. asburylanes.com.

3. DANNY CLINCH TRANSPARENT GALLERY is an immersive art and music venue selling large-format prints, T-shirts, and books of rock portraits by the music photographer and Jersey native, along with Midcentury Modern furniture and a diverse collection

of vinyl records. fb.com/dannyclinchttransparent.

4. Airy boutique **PATRIÆ** offers vintage objects and home goods, along with clothing made from sustainable materials. Stock up on owner Barbara Pisch's tote bags and pillows, all handmade from hemp and linen sourced on her trips to Eastern Europe. patriaestudio.com.

5. PASCAL & SABINE nods to the brasseries of France with its candlelit leather banquettes, marble bar, and menu of classic dishes like coq au vin and pan-roasted sole meunière. pascalandsabine.com; entrées \$17–\$65.

6. Sample the aptly named Perfect Gin and Tonic at **ASBURY PARK DISTILLING CO.**, a sleek tasting room that makes artisanal spirits and bitters on site. apdistilling.com.



JUST BACK FROM

Design-Centric Destinations

The travel experts T+L consults with are constantly on the go, researching new experiences to offer their clients. We asked three to tell us about their latest and greatest overseas shopping trip. **BY MADELINE BILIS**

"Jewelry shopping in **Jaipur** was hyper-stimulating. When people describe India as a kaleidoscope of color, this is what they mean. These jewel shops, like the Gem Palace (above), Gem Plaza, and Gyan Jewels, are just so visually ornate." — Julia B. Pirrung, Jetset World Travel (julia@jetsetworldtravel.com; 312-574-1181)

"I surprised my mother with a long weekend in **Paris** for her 70th birthday. We visited École Lesage, a school of couture embroidery where artisans learn the beadwork and featherwork they'll later do for brands like Chanel, as well as haute couture designer Jeanne Lanvin's historic offices." — Barkley Hickox, Local Foreigner (hickox@localforeigner.com; 646-455-3101)

"I planned a girls' trip to Morocco, and we had an incredible time in **Marrakesh**. There are bright fabrics and beautiful tiles everywhere you look. The best things to shop for at the markets are leather goods and home furnishings. For rugs, head to Galerie Talsint, and for caftans, go to Maison du Kaftan Marocain." — Kendra Thornton, Royal Travel & Tours (kthornton@royal-travel.com; 815-217-0608)



DISCOVERIES

Next-Gen Hotel Swag

It's no longer enough for a hotel to slap its logo on a ball cap, a luggage tag, or—perish the thought!—an ashtray. These days, properties are giving the resort souvenir fresh appeal, stocking their gift shops and online stores with high-style collaborations that reflect a sense of place. Early this year, Christian Louboutin teamed up with **Royal Mansour Marrakech** (royalmansour.com; doubles from \$1,000) to create babouche slippers (from \$558) that echo the property's Moorish details. Jewelry designer Mercedes Salazar has launched a line of colorful earrings and embroidered bangles inspired by the **Luxury Collection's** Mexican properties

(from \$150; luxurycollectionstore.com). Tuscany's **Hotel Il Pellicano** (hotelilpellicano.com; doubles from \$777) has partnered with Birkenstock for Il Dolce Far Niente, a collection of sandals (from \$110) that radiate the seaside resort's signature *sprezzatura*. And **Belmond Hotel Cipriani** (belmond.com; doubles from \$1,519), in Venice, debuted bags (from \$1,345) created with Dellaluna, a local leather atelier that works with some of the world's best-known fashion houses. In forging these partnerships, hotels are bidding to be more than mere hospitality companies—they're trying to make themselves full-fledged lifestyle brands. — L.H.B.

▲ **Royal Mansour Marrakech** collaborated with Christian Louboutin in a collection of babouches.

► **Belmond Hotel Cipriani**, in Venice, created a line of bags in conjunction with Dellaluna.





Art, Design, and Hospitality Collide in Rome

Every new hotel seems to have a gallery these days. Now one forward-thinking gallery has opened its own hotel. **BY GISELA WILLIAMS**

▲ From left: An apartment at the Rooms of Rome; collector and curator Alda Fendi.

T+L A-List travel advisor Joyce Falcone can plan an art-focused Italy itinerary (info@italianconcierge.com; 888-674-3311).

STAYING AT THE ROOMS OF ROME is about as close as you can get to spending the night in a contemporary art museum. The new apartment-hotel can be found inside the 17th-century Palazzo Rhinoceros, which also houses the galleries of the Fondazione Alda Fendi Esperimenti. This genre-bending project has been almost two decades in the making.

When luxury giant LVMH acquired the Fendi brand in 2001, Alda, the youngest of the fashion family's five sisters, chose to pursue another passion: art. She stumbled upon the abandoned palazzo years ago when her foundation staged a play at a nearby fish market. Located just steps from the Tiber in the ancient but newly buzzy Velabro district, it was ideal for the mixed-use cultural center she hoped to create. "I love discovering spaces that are unknown to the city's inhabitants and making them accessible to everyone," Fendi says. "Rome can renew itself by recalling its history and cultural heritage."

The Palazzo opened last year after a renovation by Jean Nouvel, who also conceived the restaurant (an outpost of the

100-year-old Paris institution Caviar Kaspia) and the Rooms' 24 unique serviced apartments. With furniture by European designers like Vitra and Cassina, each is a pastiche of historical and modern references. Nouvel wanted to show the layers of history—floors transition from recovered tiles into poured concrete, and walls fade to show crumbling brick or pink stucco beneath. A more dramatic intervention: monumental, polished-steel cubes that act like rooms within rooms, opening to reveal workstations or state-of-the-art kitchens.

Fendi recruited Spanish hotelier Kike Sarasola, founder of the Room Mate hotel group, to manage the suites, which are also available to long-term guests and visiting artists. Because this is no ordinary hotel, there is no real lobby; staffers appear at the Fondazione reception when summoned. If you need anything—from a spa treatment to a helicopter tour—just ask.

Within the palazzo, borders between hotel and cultural space are fluid; video art is projected onto the walls, and the galleries host rotating exhibitions, including pieces on loan from the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. Wander around and you might bump into, say, the actor Vincent Gallo performing *Julius Caesar* in the stairwell. When looking for a hotel partnership, Fendi insisted from the beginning that the art come first: "The Fondazione should be a laboratory, with experiments on every floor." ♦

roomsofrome.com; doubles from \$279.

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Savoring Salvador

Halfway up Brazil's coast, Bahia's capital has a unique cultural heritage—influenced by European settlers, African slaves, and indigenous groups like the Pataxó and the Tupinamba—that sets its cuisine apart, with ingredients like dende oil, dried shrimp, and coconut milk. Today Salvador is a diner's paradise, with new bars and restaurants that are putting inventive twists on beloved Bahian dishes. **BY ALEX SCHECHTER**

PRETA

Hop a boat to this welcoming spot on Ilha de Maré, just outside the city. The patio is lively, with a canopy of rainbow-colored parasols, and the Bahian menu is equally upbeat. A highlight is the aromatic shrimp stew, a novel take on *muqueca*, a traditional Salvadoran fish dish. fb.com/preta-restaurant; entrées \$19–\$43.

MANGA

Situated in a 19th-century house overlooking the beach, Manga is the passion project of married chefs Katrin and Dante Bassi. The presentation is as imaginative as the ingredients: a green-papaya salad is topped with an olive biscuit that has cilantro

sprouting out of it, and sorbet made with pitanga fruit arrives hanging from the branches of a bonsai tree. mangamar.com.br; tasting menu \$57.

FASANO SALVADOR

Italian specialties dominate at this restaurant, set in the newest outpost of high-end Brazilian hotel group Fasano. But a special menu by chef Tereza Paim, a Salvador native, nods to Bahian street food with grilled shrimp in a sauce made from the pulpy, passion-fruit-like *mangaba* and generous plates of *acarajé*, black-eyed-pea fritters traditionally sold on the beach. fasano.com.br; entrées \$24–\$41.

ORI

Fabricio Lemos's award-winning 2016 debut, Origem, established Salvador as a center for modern Bahian cooking. His next act is more relaxed, with dishes that are elevated yet simple. Try the fresh ravioli stuffed with *vat-apá*, a spicy mash of yuca, dried shrimp, and peanuts, and for dessert, *pudim*, a Brazilian-style flan with coconut milk and crumbled chestnuts. 656 Avda. Santa Luzia; entrées \$15–\$21.

THE BUNKER

Created by a beer sommelier, this craft-beer shop and tasting room stocks more than 200 labels, including most of Bahia's dozen microbreweries. Try the refreshingly tart Gose Cajú from Mandacaru, which pairs perfectly with the Bunker's Bahian-fusion sandwiches—and with the street food from nearby vendors. thebunker.com.br.

▲ *Preta, a vibrant restaurant situated on an island in Salvador's Bay of All Saints.*

▼ *Manga's fish tartare with grapes, caviar, basil, and fennel blossoms.*



Contact T+L A-List travel advisor (and native Brazilian) Martin Frankenberg (martin@matuete.com; 55-11-98188-5100) to book a trip.

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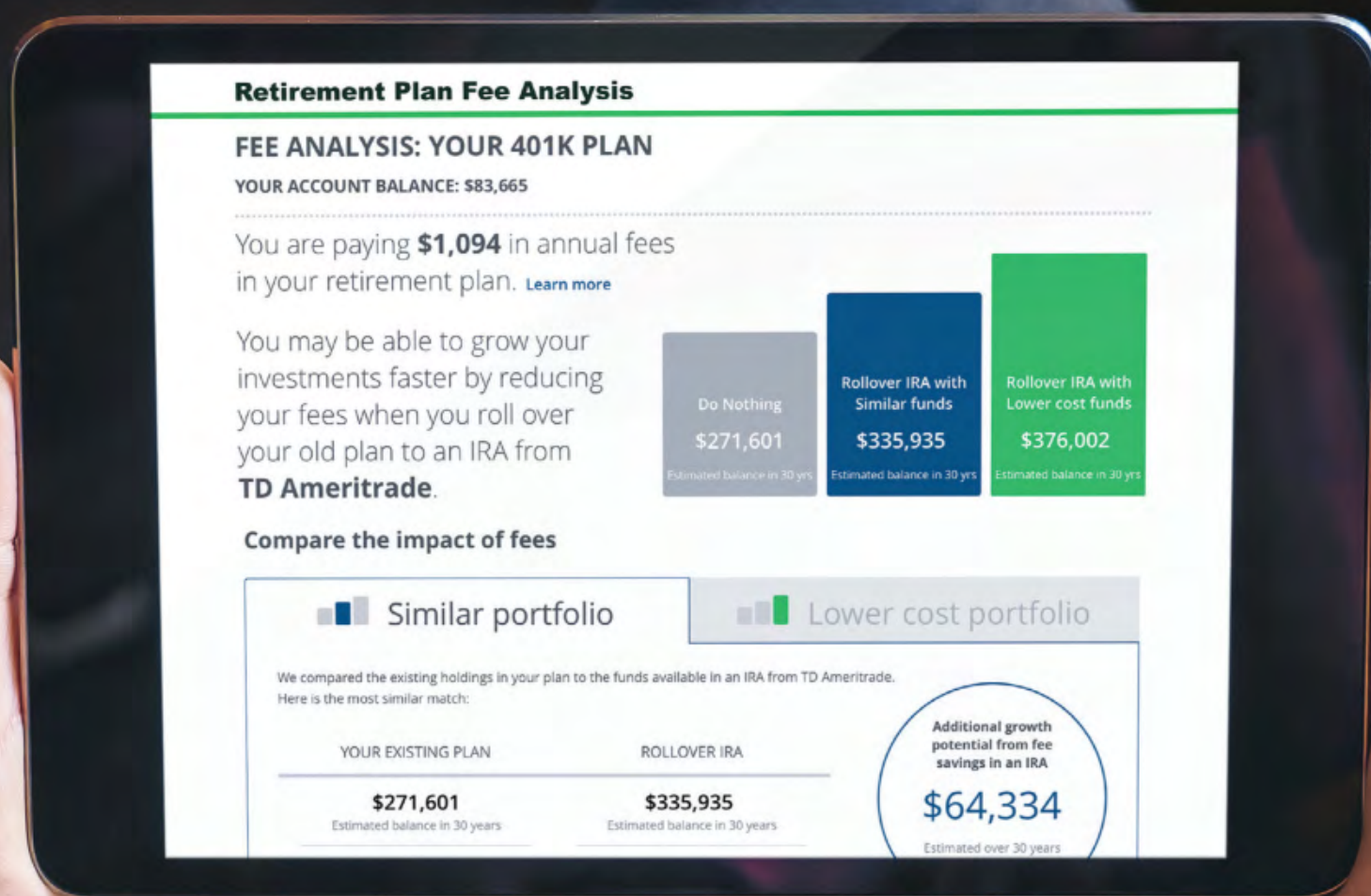
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Travel + Leisure

Experiences

TRAVELERS' TALES, FROM NEAR AND FAR

Edited by PETER TERZIAN

Ponant's Le Lapérouse off the coast of La Digue, in the Seychelles.

AN OCEAN APART

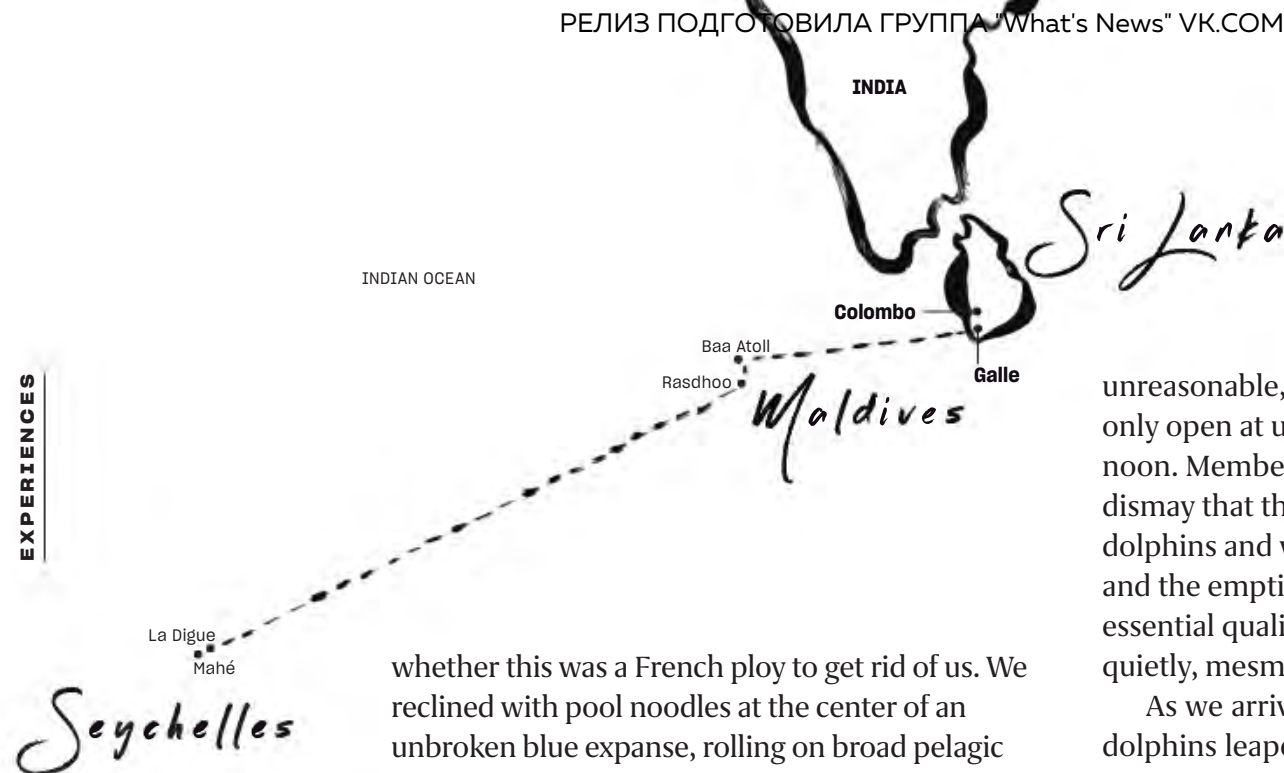
With Gallic gentility to spare, Ponant's new ship takes guests from the Seychelles to Sri Lanka for a close-up look at some of the world's most beautiful—and delicate—marine environments.

BY MAGGIE SHIPSTEAD

WHILE AT SEA on a cruise, jumping overboard is generally discouraged. But one blazing hot morning not long ago, on a flat, glassy sea west of the Maldives, the engines of *Le Lapérouse*, a new ship from the French expedition line Ponant, went quiet. My friend Bobby and I looked up from our books. Our morning was already a success: we'd nabbed prime real estate by the pool, shaded chaises usually claimed by early risers before we even woke

up. The French-speaking passengers, a majority on the bilingual ship, were at a mandatory destination briefing, leaving their territory vulnerable.

"Maybe they'll let us swim," Bobby said. "No way," I said. "That would be insane." But crew members were already releasing boundary ropes behind the ship. Soon we and our fellow anglophones were plunging off the stern and paddling around atop the 8,000-foot-deep Indian Ocean, giddy and incredulous, joking about



whether this was a French ploy to get rid of us. We reclined with pool noodles at the center of an unbroken blue expanse, rolling on broad pelagic swells. Below our toes, sunbeams flickered down into the abyss.

We'd sailed from Mahé, the largest island in the Seychelles. With only 92 cabins, *Le Lapérouse* is relatively small, and its sleek lines and stylish blue-and-white paint job give it the look of a mega-yacht more than a typical cruise ship. Inside, the Scandinavian-style blond-wood décor is chicly understated, and a French notion of graciousness reigns: drinks are included, shorts aren't allowed at dinner, and every meal involves an extensive selection of cheeses. Throughout our 10-day journey, the young French staff looked impossibly cool, crisp, and poreless, no matter how steamy the equatorial air.

Our first port of call was the nearby island of La Digue. Bobby and I bicycled past wood-shuttered bungalows and through a vanilla plantation, pausing to admire the resident giant tortoises. At Anse Source d'Argent, a white-sand beach loomed over by the massive, sculptural granite boulders the Seychelles are famous for, we wallowed in the shallows while local dogs splashed nearby, hunting for crabs.

Cycling and wallowing is hot work in the tropics, though, and the air-conditioned *Le Lapérouse* felt like a sanctuary. For the next four days, spent at sea crossing from La Digue to the Maldives, Bobby and I honed a routine. We lazed reading on the foredeck. We lazed by the cheese buffet. We lazed in our twin beds watching movies. We atoned by jogging on treadmills, then enjoyed a cocktail before our four-course dinner.

A much-promoted feature of *Le Lapérouse* is the Blue Eye, a lounge below the waterline where large almond-shaped windows offer views into the sea while hydrophones transmit the sounds of aquatic mammals, should any happen to be around. Passengers, however, disagreed about the Blue Eye's purpose. Some considered it a bar—not unreasonably, since drinks were available. Others, believing it a space for silent contemplation, were annoyed by the imbibers. This was also not

unreasonable, as on some days the lounge was only open at unusual times: say, from 10 a.m. to noon. Members of both contingents expressed dismay that the windows revealed not a parade of dolphins and whales, but only whooshing bubbles and the emptiness of the ocean—arguably its most essential quality. For our part, Bobby and I sat quietly, mesmerized by the blue.

As we arrived in the Maldives, spinner dolphins leaped and somersaulted in our wake. Much of this nation resembles a dream of tropical paradise: white sand, aquamarine sea, swaying coconut palms. Its 26 atolls (incorporating nearly 1,190 islands) are the remnants of reefs that once fringed volcanic islands. After 50 million years of erosion and subsidence, only fragile wafers of land remain. Today, the Maldives' highest elevation is less than 10 feet above sea level; because of climate change, the entire country is at risk of vanishing by the end of this century.

At Rasdhoo, Bobby and I went scuba diving along a reef wall that descended into darkness while eagle rays flapped slowly overhead. The next day, at Baa Atoll, we drowsed on sugary sand. That morning, crew members had picked our little stretch of beach clean of trash, but I found washed-up plastic when I strolled farther along the shore. In our snorkel spot, the coral was mostly dead and fishless. The dream of paradise is really the dream of a place untouched by humans, but this landscape is too delicate not to show the damage we have inflicted on it.

The hectic, charming city of Galle, Sri Lanka, was our last port of call. Galle makes no pretense of being paradise—it's a city of weaving *tuk-tuks* and beseeching touts, street dogs and fish sellers, peeling plaster and dusty cricket pitches. In the walled Fort District, where the streets are quieter and lined with inviting boutiques and restaurants, we bought painted bowls and bright textiles. After a gelato break, we stepped into the welcome coolness of an 18th-century Dutch Reformed church, where we found creaky wood-and-cane pews and, outside, the gravestones of Dutch colonists who died long ago and far from home.

As our *tuk-tuk* wove among buses and motorbikes, honking and swerving, the evening sky cast an amethyst glow over the chaos. A huge flock of egrets rose from the waterfront trees. Bobby and I exchanged grins. It wasn't perfect; it was beautiful. At the top of *Le Lapérouse's* gangway, a crew member scanned our IDs. "Last ones," he said. "All aboard." ✦

TRIP PLANNER

Most flights to Mahé connect through Frankfurt, Abu Dhabi, or Dubai. Ponant ships depart from the cruise port in Victoria (ponant.com; 10-day cruises from \$5,160 per person). For help booking a Ponant voyage, contact one of T+L's A-List travel advisors.

Marilyn Clark (marilyn@lighthousetravel.net; 844-339-1774) specializes in luxury cruises and can arrange for the best cabins and fun extras.

Susanne Hamer (susanne.h@travelstore.com; 310-689-5411) is an expert on the Seychelles and the Maldives and can find you the most secluded overwater bungalows.

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◀ *St. Peter's Church, a 19th-century landmark in Jaffa.*

THE JOY OF JAFFA

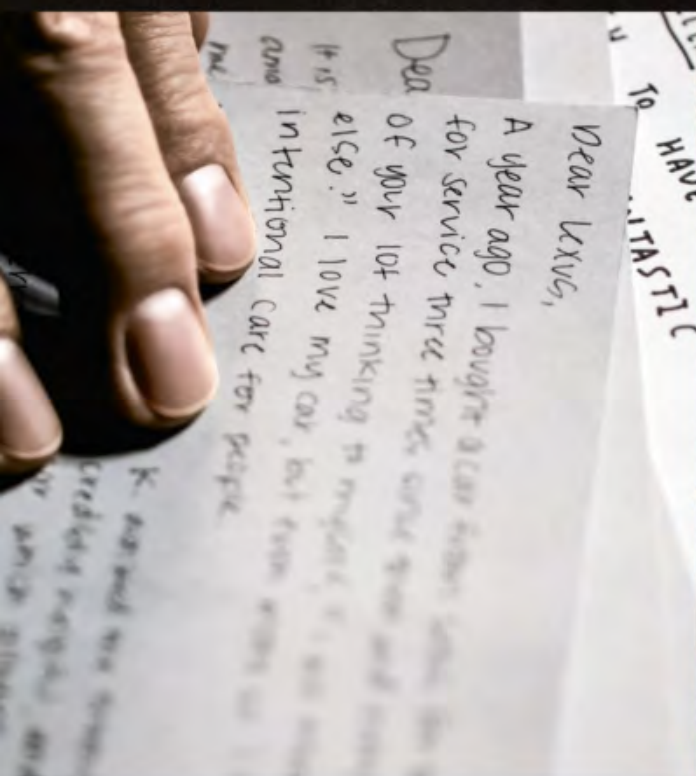
This history-steeped part of Tel Aviv is undergoing a renaissance, with chic shops, cafés, and a sleek new hotel weaving themselves into an ancient urban tapestry.

BY RUTH MARGALIT

FOR THOSE WHO, like me, live in Tel Aviv, the port city of Jaffa is the place to stroll to when the larger metropolis becomes overbearing. Here, on an attractive promontory that juts into the

Mediterranean, the cobblestoned streets are cooler, the beaches quieter, the sunsets somehow more resplendent.

Jaffa, which was subsumed by Tel Aviv in 1950, shortly after Israel's founding, is older than the rest of the city, with stone ruins that date back 3,500 years. Its well-appointed port was once the gateway to Palestine, its population predominantly Arab. Today, Jaffa is home to some 50,000 people, two-thirds of them Jewish. Such changes to the local fabric have not gone uncontested. In many respects, Jaffa is a tale of two cities: one of poor, crowded neighborhoods



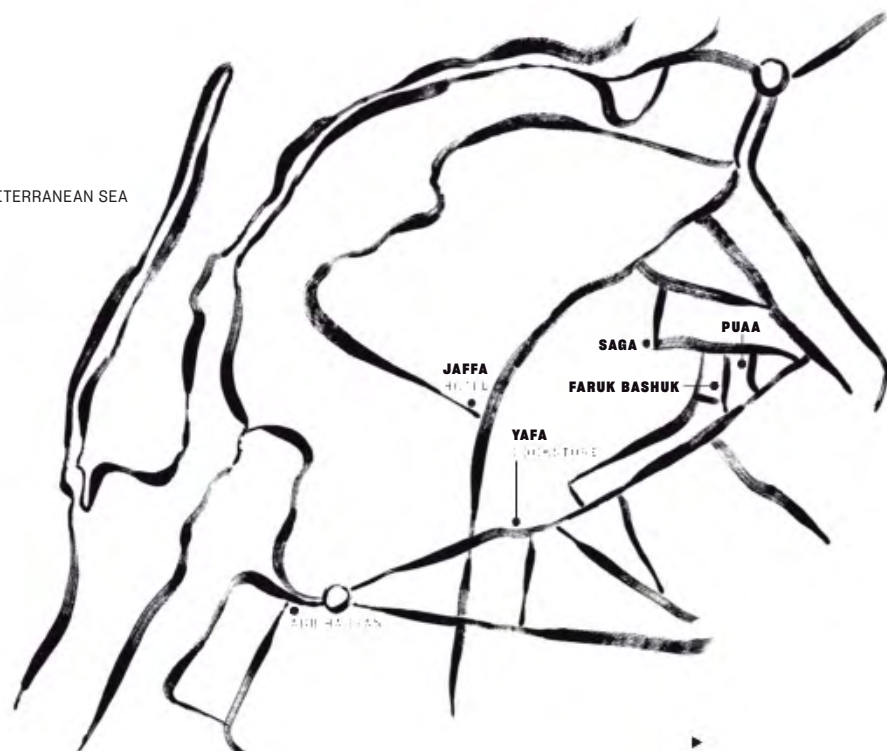
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MEDITERRANEAN SEA



fallen into disrepair, the other of glitzy new residential projects that have risen in their midst.

Like so many of the world's star cities, Tel Aviv is gentrifying at a dizzying speed. As its younger inhabitants inch southward, many have settled in Jaffa. When I left Tel Aviv for Brooklyn a decade ago, Jaffa resembled a time capsule. I moved back earlier this year to find the Jaffa skyline dotted

► *Squid-ink ravioli at Don Camillo, a restaurant at the new Jaffa Hotel.*

▼ *The Chapel, the hotel bar, was constructed in the former hospital's place of worship.*



with cranes and old grocery stores replaced by artisanal cheese stands.

One of the clearest signs of Jaffa's transformation is the preserved 19th-century hospital that has been repurposed as a new luxury hotel that pays tribute to this historic place. The Jaffa Hotel is the brainchild of Aby Rosen, the New York-based real estate mogul whose firm also owns the Gramercy Park Hotel and the Seagram Building in Manhattan. Rosen, who has family in Tel Aviv, saw that changes to the neighborhood had created a growing demand for high-end hospitality. So he leased the site, which was built in 1879 for Christian pilgrims and the nuns who cared for them, and enlisted John Pawson, the minimalist British designer, and Ramy Gill, the Israeli architect and conservationist, to assist him in reimagining it.

Part of Marriott's Luxury Collection, the Jaffa Hotel is a mosaic of old and new. It comprises two wings: the former hospital, where I stayed for two nights, and a newly erected building. Local architectural elements, such as moucharaby, an Arabic form of latticed shading, have been incorporated into both. The meticulous renovation, which took more than a decade, preserved the Neoclassical building's patina and original signage. (I stayed in the eerily named Salle D'Opération—the Operating Room.) A bar called the Chapel occupies the site's old place of worship. I found it gorgeous, with its checkered marble floors and recessed stained-glass windows, but it made me a bit uneasy. What was I to make of the waitresses dressed in sexy nun habits? How does one order a drink where the altar used to be?

The rooms themselves are majestic, with arched, 20-foot-tall ceilings. Each contains a



single artwork, by Israeli photographer Tal Shochat. Minimalism reigns in the streamlined furnishings and practical wooden shelving. The television is hidden inside a mirrored wall, which turns into a screen when switched on.

A colonnaded inner courtyard links the hotel's two wings. On my first morning, I sat and sipped coffee there, taking in the scents of the citrus trees that shade the tranquil piazza. (Jaffa oranges are exported around the world.) Then I investigated what at first seemed like a misplaced stone wall. It dates from the 13th century and was unearthed during excavations of the site. Another part of the wall sits in the lobby, flanked by two Damien Hirst paintings, like its own dazzling work of art.

During a rare downpour, I took shelter in Don Camillo, one of the hotel's two restaurants, which offers lavish Italian fare atop a cellar with more than 3,000 bottles, a third of them Israeli. (The other restaurant, Golda's, is a serviceable take on a New York Jewish deli.) I was initially skeptical about Don Camillo—Israel is known for its falafel, not its farfalle—but was astounded by the quality of the dishes. An appetizer of yellowtail carpaccio, on shards of pomelo with red onion and a hint of jalapeño, was light and refreshing. The charred calamari over chickpeas and the black squid-ink ravioli with shrimp were so flavorful they assuaged any guilt I may have otherwise felt for eating squid and shellfish—decidedly nonkosher—in the Holy Land.

The Jaffa Hotel is located in the heart of a busy neighborhood where gems both ancient and modern sit side by side. The former include the Ottoman-era clock tower, built to commemorate the sultan, and Jaffa's famous flea market, more than a century old, where sellers hawking secondhand goods vie for space with craftsmen who repair antiques.

Nestled behind the flea market, Puaa is a local favorite serving reliable Israeli staples like *sabich* (a pita sandwich with fried eggplant) and *shakshuka* (baked eggs in a tomato-and-pepper sauce) alongside more adventurous dishes, such as a red tahini appetizer made from scorched tomatoes. Some visitors opt for the restaurant's cozy indoors, laden with flowers and thrift-store finds, but I preferred to take a seat on its veranda and watch the shoppers stream by. Just around the corner is Faruk Bashuk, a deceptively pared-down restaurant with first-class dishes, including *labneh*-filled ravioli doused with beet cream. Abu Hassan, closer to the port, is often lauded as the best hummus place in



the country. There is no menu, only three variations on the simple but hearty spread. (Warm *hummus masabacha*, served with whole chickpeas and hot sauce, is the house specialty, but take this Israeli girl's advice and try the classic hummus.)

The following day, I visited Yafa, a charming little bookstore where one can browse histories of the area while digging into an excellent Palestinian *maqluba*—a stewed meat-and-rice dish that is turned upside down during cooking, forming a kind of cake. Then I ambled over to SAGA, a gallery featuring the wares of dozens of young Israeli designers with an adjacent café. As dusk settled into evening, the muezzin's call to prayer sounded from nearby mosques. The snaking streets filled with people, cigarette smoke, and music.

Jaffa's restaurants and bars pride themselves on staying open, as their menus state, "until the last customer." A case in point is Ramesses, a sprawling 250-seat restaurant and bar that takes over an entire pedestrian street. I occupied a corner beside a boisterous group of women celebrating a friend's 40th birthday, and ordered a plate of baby zucchini from East Jerusalem baked with sweet tomatoes and sheep's-milk cheese. It paired nicely with a smoky concoction of mezcal, St.-Germain, and blood-orange juice that came dusted in pink Himalayan salt. I followed that with a creamy fish curry and a zesty gin cocktail with sparkling wine and fresh ginger and tarragon.

The hours crawled by; it was getting late. I was about to call a Gett taxi—the local equivalent of Uber. But the night air in Jaffa was salty and alive with possibility. I switched on the flashlight on my phone, and walked. +

▲ The outdoor terrace at Puaa, a popular Jaffa café.

TRIP PLANNER

Jaffa Hotel

marriott.com; doubles from \$600.

Puaa puaa.co.il; entrées \$12–\$21.

Faruk Bashuk

6 Nakhman St.; entrées \$12–\$36.

Abu Hassan

1 Ha-Dolphin St.; hummus \$6.

Yafa yafabook.co.il.

Ramesses

ramessesjaffa.com; entrées \$9–\$19.

Rachel L. Epstein

(rachel.epstein@frosch.com; 713-590-8102), a member of T+L's A-List of top travel advisors, can arrange private itineraries throughout Israel.



ON THE SLOW ROAD IN WEST MICHIGAN

Along the eastern edge of Lake Michigan, a string of towns and cities offer a wealth of art and architecture, excellent food and drink, and plenty of summertime pleasures outdoors. **BY JEFF CHU**

Clockwise from top left: Lake Michigan; Virtue Cider, near Saugatuck; the Frank Lloyd Wright–designed Meyer May House, in Grand Rapids.

WHY HAS WEST MICHIGAN—with its vibrant small cities and verdant countryside, its rich architectural heritage and nationally renowned beer—escaped wider notice? For one thing, self-promotion has never been part of its culture. The Potawatomi, a tribe that called the region home until the 19th century, held humility as one of their most prized

virtues. And boasting was anathema to the Dutch Calvinist immigrants who settled here in the mid 1800s. (Rebuking wasn't, and still isn't—expect to be gently corrected, as I was the first time I visited, if you say “Western” instead of “West” Michigan.)

But don't be fooled: the Mitten's left side has plenty to brag about. Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo brim with breweries and distilleries and excellent farm-to-table restaurants. Bright-white beaches and picturesque dunes line Lake Michigan's eastern shore. And this heartland of the American furniture industry is home to splendid architecture and design from major names like Marcel Breuer and Frank Lloyd Wright. It all makes for a jam-packed long weekend. Here's how to explore this overlooked corner of the Midwest, from Grand Rapids to Saugatuck to Kalamazoo and back.

FRIDAY

Crafted by an area woodworker, the gorgeous wooden bar at **Littlebird** (thelittlebirdgr.com), in downtown Grand Rapids, is your perfect breakfast perch. Order the all-day eatery's namesake breakfast sandwich—sunny-side-up egg, cheese, ham, and garlic mayo piled onto a brioche bun.

A block away is the **Grand Rapids Art Museum** (artmuseumgr.org).

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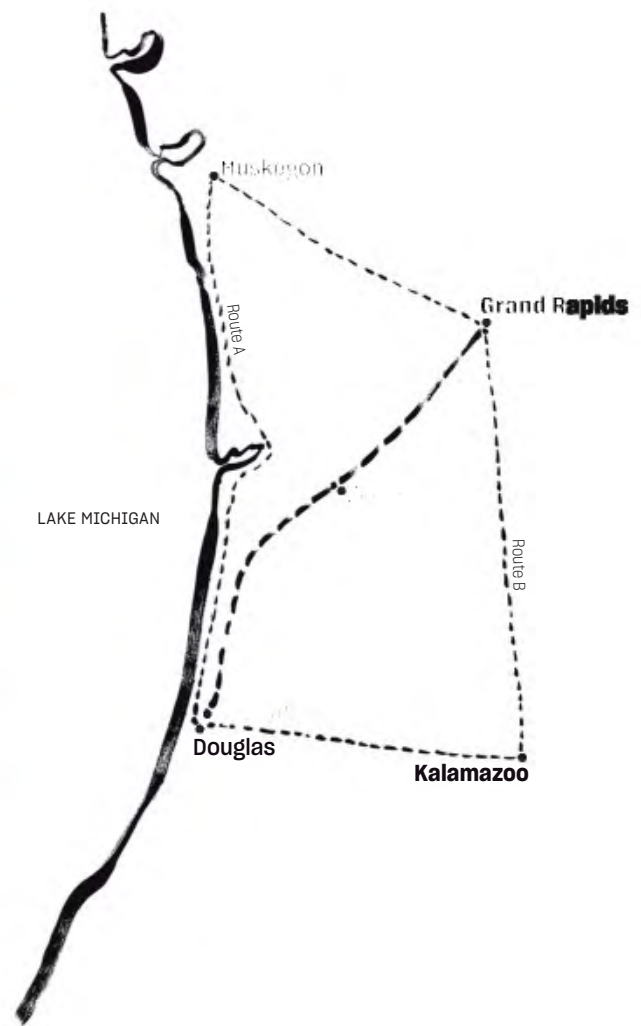
GRAM's small but exceptional collection has works by Ellsworth Kelly, Kara Walker, and Alexander Calder, but its real stars have local provenance. I was entranced by *Eight-Fold Screen*, a paint-and-gilt-on-walnut work by South Africa-born Eugene Masselink, who lived in Grand Rapids. A onetime assistant to Frank Lloyd Wright, Masselink created the piece in 1956 for a *House Beautiful* editor's Wright-designed bedroom. There's also a bold series of posters from the Herman Miller headquarters, in nearby Zeeland, and the company's Eames chairs and Nelson benches appear throughout the space.

Next, walk 15 minutes to **Founders Brewing Co.** (foundersbrewing.com). Founders is a favorite among beer geeks, taking four of the top 10 spots in the latest Best Beers in America survey from the American Homebrewers Association. The taproom's sandwiches, from a classic Reuben to a behemoth of pulled pork, bacon, and beer cheese, are designed to pair with brews like the creamy Nitro Oatmeal Stout and the crisp All-Day IPA.

Spend the afternoon strolling in the **Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park** (meijergardens.org), an art-filled wonderland featuring works by Ai Weiwei, Richard Serra, Louise Bourgeois, and Barbara Hepworth. A \$115 million expansion of the complex, led by architects Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, should be finished by 2021.

Dine at **Grove** (groverestaurant.com; entrées \$10–\$42). The small-plates sampler offers a brilliant cross-section of its imaginative New American cuisine. Then take a cab across the Grand River to the **Long Road Distillers** (longroaddistillers.com) for a nightcap. I liked its award-winning Michigan—fragrant with local juniper,

From top:
Saugatuck's historic
downtown; Scotch
eggs at Littlebird, in
Grand Rapids.



mint, and fennel—and its Straight Bourbon, made with Michigan-grown grains. Home away from home tonight: the riverside **JW Marriott** (ilovethejw.com; doubles from \$269), Grand Rapids' finest hotel.

SATURDAY

Fuel up at **Madcap Coffee** (madcapcoffee.com), a café-roastery in a beautifully refurbished auto body shop. Two blocks away, the **Fulton Street Farmers Market** (fultonstreetmarket.org) has been the place to go for produce since 1922. In season, you'll find corn and beans—cultivated here since the days of the Potawatomi's extensive gardens—as well as year-round products, such as gluten-free lentil pasta and Michigan maple syrup.

West Michigan's forests supplied the state's famous furniture makers, including Steelcase and Herman Miller. The Main Site, Herman Miller's headquarters, isn't open to visitors, but the nearby **Company Store** (officeoutlet.net), its official outlet, does, and the prices are extraordinary. When I visited, I found an Eva Zeisel bud vase, normally \$100, for \$30; Paul Smith's Maharam fabrics, typically \$145 a yard, for \$15; and a molded-plywood Eames chair, usually \$1,009, for \$500.

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Grayling Ceramics, a pottery studio in Kalamazoo.

Saugatuck, 20 minutes south, has the postcard charm of a New England coastal village and a reputation as a haven for artists and the LGBTQ community. After lunch at **Grow** (grow-food.com), wander to Saugatuck Retro Boat Rentals, which rents restored speedboats to take down the Kalamazoo River toward Lake Michigan. "Speedboat" describes form more than function: the speed limit is 4 mph. That makes for a gentle journey past waterfront homes and the ruins of Singapore, a 19th-century timber port whose founders had outsize ambitions.

Head for the neighboring hamlet of Douglas and check in to the **Pines Motor Lodge** (thepinesmotorlodge.com; doubles from \$139), a lovingly modernized, delightfully kitschy 1950s motel. Downtown Douglas is a short walk away; try **Everyday People Café** (everydaypeoplecafe.com) for an eclectic menu of globally influenced dishes like kimchi fried rice, pierogi, and duck confit.

SUNDAY

Begin your day with a hike through sun-dappled woods, over towering dunes, and along the wide beaches at **Saugatuck Dunes State Park** (michigan.dnr.com). Then drive to the **Southerner** (thesouthernermi.com) for breakfast. You may not associate chicken and biscuits with Michigan, but chef Matthew Millar's stellar version tells the story of how they got here. The two-time James Beard Award semifinalist wrote his menu as a "love letter to Appalachia," honoring a cuisine brought by his forebears, who moved north in the 1950s seeking opportunity and auto-industry jobs. (You can still drive Michigan-made: we road-tripped in a Buick Enclave, made in Lansing.)

From left: The Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, in Grand Rapids; the Grand Rapids Art Museum.



En route back to Grand Rapids' airport, choose your own adventure. Route A is for architecture geeks. Just outside Muskegon sits **St. Francis de Sales** (stfrancisns.org), one of two churches in the world designed by Brutalist master Marcel Breuer. Circle the bulky, steel-and-concrete structure, then enter at noon, as Mass ends. (You'll find self-guided tour instructions near the baptismal font.) The forbidding exterior houses an airy nave, and the curved walls create an embracing effect, as well as optical illusions: as you move around the space, the walls seem to move, too.

Next, stop at Frank Lloyd Wright's **Meyer May House** (meyermayhouse.steelcase.com), 45 minutes southeast in Grand Rapids' landmarked Heritage Hill neighborhood. Though completed in 1909, this luminous home feels of-the-moment. One of Wright's last Prairie-style projects, it was built to echo the wide expanse of America's plains, with recessed horizontal mortar lines and hedges cut to parallel the building. Steelcase, which now owns the house, offers tours on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.

Route B is for beverage lovers. **Virtue Cider** (virtuecider.com), set amid rolling countryside 15 minutes east of Saugatuck, was founded in 2011 by the former brewmaster of Chicago's Goose Island. Traditional European cider-making inspired its eight standard varieties and a series of single-orchard ciders celebrating local farms. After you've sampled the wares, have your designated driver escort you an hour southeast to **Grayling Ceramics** (graylingceramics.com), a tiny pottery studio in Kalamazoo producing unexpectedly elegant growlers and beer steins.

From Grayling, it's less than half a mile to **Bell's** (bellsbeer.com), West Michigan's other much-celebrated craft-brewing paragon—the perfect place to toast a journey's end. +



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With a hot food scene, rich history, and heaps of Lowcountry charm, Charleston is a home run of a city. Take in favorite places like these:

HISTORIC CHARLESTON

Cannonborough-Elliottborough Explore the quaint shops and cozy cafés in these historic neighborhoods.

White Point Gardens Stroll through this park in The Battery, with old oak trees and picture-pretty views.

The Dewberry Check into this gorgeous midcentury-modern hotel, ideally located on Marion Square in the heart of the city.

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Rave-worthy golf, sweet beaches, and water sports give Kiawah a prime place on your bucket list. Don't miss these summertime moments:

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Savannah
Star chefs and chic hotels are giving this river city a renaissance. Explore antebellum streets, colorful mural art, and buzzworthy spots like these:

THE BOHEMIAN HOTEL

The Collins Quarter Come for champagne brunch and savor the unique Australian café vibe.

Riverfront Hear street music, buy palm frond art, and take a pic at the Waving Girl Statue.

The Bohemian Hotel Savannah Riverfront, Autograph Collection Get comfy in this high-design gem with interiors reminiscent of a historic boat.

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WELLNESS, TUSCAN STYLE

Many Americans go to Tuscany for the wine. **GISELA WILLIAMS** traveled to Borgo Santo Pietro, one of the region's top retreats, for the spa and the organic gardens—and the Chianti.

IN MY VERY FIRST AFTERNOON at Borgo Santo Pietro, a fantasy of a grand Tuscan estate just outside the town of Chiusdino, I managed to get happily lost in the gardens on the way to the spa. It wasn't difficult—the artfully landscaped grounds have so many secret corners and intriguing plantings that I couldn't help being distracted at every turn. Stepping out of the manor onto a stone terrace, I was surrounded by birdsong and the sound of trickling fountains. I

passed through an opening in a hedge and entered a formal garden with a vine-covered cottage at one end. Inside, Laura Hewitt, Borgo's florist, was arranging apple blossoms, eucalyptus, and white oleander on a table. "This is the best office in the world," she said.

Burned out from juggling work deadlines and the logistics of raising three young children, I had come to Borgo Santo Pietro to rejuvenate. The resort's spa is small but exceptional, with a focus on revitalizing stressed and aging skin. It even has its own line of natural beauty products, called Seed to Skin, that uses ingredients grown in the gardens and around the property.

The intimate, 20-room estate is a half-hour's drive from Siena, embedded in a landscape of forests, fields, and ancient monasteries. Seven centuries ago, Borgo Santo Pietro was the site of an

▲
The gardens at Borgo Santo Pietro, a resort in Tuscany.

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inn where Christian pilgrims would stop on their way to pay homage to Saint Galgano, who is buried nearby. Claus Thottrup, a luxury real estate developer based in London, and his wife, Jeanette, purchased the land in 2001 and spent more than seven years transforming it from a ruin into a hotel that consists of a stone manor house surrounded by ornately manicured gardens, farmland, and guest bungalows.

The spa is a large stone cottage with arched glass doors and a terra-cotta roof hidden in an expansive cherry and apple orchard. When I arrived, two fireplaces were lit on opposite sides of the main waiting room. I was greeted by Laura Dellacasa Bellingegni, a young massage therapist who radiated serenity. She brought me into one of the two treatment spaces, and for the next hour gave me a firm but relaxing massage using warm natural oil from a melted Seed to Skin candle. It was one of the best and most intuitive massages I've ever had. For the Ritual by Seed to Skin facial, Bellingegni stroked pressure points on my face and scalp. I fell into a half-sleep as she misted me with aromatic potions and gently rubbed creams onto my skin, including a

charcoal and volcanic-clay mask called Black Magic. Whatever kind of magic it was, it worked. I drifted back to my suite with tingling skin and endless gratitude, knowing that there was a big, fluffy bed waiting for me.

Jeanette Thottrup, a former fashion designer, decided to create the line when she couldn't find the kinds of organic cleansers and moisturizers she dreamed about. "I wanted to make a product that worked well and communicated clearly what it was made of," she said. "Even now, most consumers think skin care is either highly scientific or completely natural. Why not combine the best of both worlds?"

After doing months of research on herbal medicine, Thottrup hired Anna Buonocore, a cosmetics specialist, to create an on-site laboratory and develop formulas with scientifically tested organic ingredients. "Occasionally nature needs a bit of help," Buonocore said. She uses the estate's organic sheep's milk and raw honey for several creams, sourcing more potent ingredients, such as algae and hibiscus-flower extract, from elsewhere.

The gardens and farm also supply the resort's two restaurants. Trattoria Sull'Albero serves traditional Italian dishes, such as grilled Florentine steak or pappardelle with duck *ragù*, in an intimate dining room built around a massive oak tree. At Meo Modo, Borgo's fine-dining restaurant, delicate bites—Jerusalem artichokes carved in the shape of leaves, buttery ravioli stuffed with slow-cooked rabbit—are served on beds of moss and vessels carved from stone.

The evening after my massage, I ate at the trattoria, indulging in a generous glass of Tuscan red and a plate of sheep's-milk cheeses made on the resort's farm. I started a conversation with Patton Blackwell, an artist from South Carolina who was spending her days painting in the hotel's gardens as Borgo's artist-in-residence for April. The next morning, I visited her studio, a glass-and-wood bungalow situated between the spa and the farm. I looked at Blackwell's abstract works—glowing greens and golds that captured the colors of the gardens and the Tuscan sunset. Thottrup had told me that she thought of herself not just as a hotelier, but as someone creating a beautiful space for people to "pause on their path and take the time to decide in which direction to go." Armed with several lotions and two nights of the best sleep I had had in years, I decided to head home and create my own little garden there, in whatever form that might take. ✦

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FOUR NEW WAYS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH LISBON

The Portuguese capital is booming—and so, too, is its hotel scene. Today there's something to suit every taste, from low-key, local experiences to lavish, high-end stays.

BY RACHEL HOWARD

WHEN I FIRST VISITED Lisbon seven years ago, the city was going through an existential crisis: bruised by the recession, young people were moving to Berlin or Brazil. Solitary men huddled around tiny *ginjinha* bars that served cherry liqueur shots for one euro. Alfama, the city's oldest neighborhood, was little more than a down-at-the-heels flea market and a few melancholy fado joints.

How times change. When I returned to Lisbon this spring with my six-year-old son, I found a city aglow. Creative start-ups have reinvigorated the economy, while canny property developers (and a major increase in flights, especially from the U.S.) have sparked a surge in tourism. MAAT, the Museum of Art, Architecture & Technology, sits like a ceramic spaceship on the waterfront.

Abandoned warehouses are now co-working studios where hipsters nurse flat whites instead of the typical *bica*, or eye-poppingly strong espresso.

The hotel landscape has also undergone a sea change. Derelict buildings are now stylish short-stay apartments; rambling palazzos have become five-star hideaways. Read on for the best new places to stay in the city of seven hills, with or without an excitable kid in tow.

VINTAGE HOTEL & SPA

You've got to love a hotel where the staff members smile indulgently as your child sprints down the corridor and screeches to a halt on his knees.



▲
The lobby of the Vintage Hotel & Spa Lisbon, near the fashionable district of Principe Real.

This is soccer-mad Portugal, after all, and my son was only pretending to be Ronaldo after scoring a winning goal.

The Vintage is a paean to Midcentury Modernism, but never slips into pastiche. While the sunflower-yellow chairs and 1950s bar cart lent our dusky-blue bedroom a firmly retro feel, the graphic prints hanging on the wall added a 21st-century edge. The 56 bedrooms and suites come in three different size categories, each themed by color: blue, a reference to the nearby Algarve coast; fern, a nod to the city's Botanical Gardens; and russet, echoing Lisbon's patchwork of terra-cotta-tiled rooftops.

Interior designer Daniela Franceschini sourced each piece of furniture personally, layering modern classics by Kai Kristiansen, Poul Cadovius, and Arne Vodder with art and objects by local artists. It all comes together beautifully.

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The guest rooms are generous, and there is a ton of public space, too, including a lobby bar with rich mahogany floors and velvet cocktail chairs, a roof terrace with the requisite views of Castelo de São Jorge, and a moody spa with a plunge pool, steam room, and sauna to soothe sore calves after scaling Lisbon's unforgiving hills. The night we arrived, we headed out to explore the hip Principe Real neighborhood, a short walk from the hotel. But the following morning, breakfast in the luminous street-level restaurant was such a feast—corn bread, local cheese, quince preserves, zucchini omelette—that I regretted not having made a dinner reservation there the night before. *thevintagelisbon.com*; doubles from \$188.

LISBOANS APARTMENTS

Arriving at the Lisboans, you might think you'd stepped into a design studio rather than a guesthouse. Check-in takes place at a long communal table, and the names of new arrivals are written on a blackboard in colored chalk. In his checked shirt and baseball cap, front desk clerk Mário Nascimento comes across more like a cool friend than an employee. He happily sat and drew ninjas with my son while the soft-spoken Isaac Almeida, one of the four owners, showed me around. Fun fact: the other three, including Isaac's wife, Tânia, are triplets.

► *At the Lisboans Apartments, textiles are all Portuguese, and furniture was designed in-house.*

▼ *A guest room at Casa Fortunato, where the owners and their children live on the top floor.*



Isaac and Tânia met as art directors at an advertising agency. When the global recession came crashing down on Lisbon, they joined forces with Tânia's sisters and borrowed the money to buy an abandoned factory, where the industrial machinery had become entwined with ivy and bindweed. It took four years to restore the building. They designed most of the Scandi-style furniture themselves and traveled all over Portugal shopping for the handwoven throws on the beds and the shimmering tiles in the crisp kitchenettes. Friends and family created some of the prints and photographs on the sun-kissed walls.

Kitchens are stocked with yogurt and house-made granola, with fresh bread and orange juice delivered each morning. For a treat, pick up goat cheese, red-pepper relish, and Madeira cake from Prado Merceria, their sage-green deli-café next door. It's a luscious showcase of the ingredients used at Prado, the farm-to-fork restaurant a few doors down. (All three businesses occupy a single block on a quiet side street.) Ask Mário to pull some chef's-apron strings; getting a table at Prado is tricky, especially on weekends. *thelisboans.com*; doubles from \$250.

CASA FORTUNATO

What's in a name? In this case, everything. Casa Fortunato feels more like a home than a hotel. And if you score one of the nine sought-after rooms, then you should consider yourself fortunate indeed. Inês Biscaya, a beaming brunette in a gingham frock, and a black Labrador named Cacau welcomed us into the circular lobby—an extravagant vision of pink marble and stucco. Beyond the reception area (a pair of vintage mint-green desks, one adorned with a

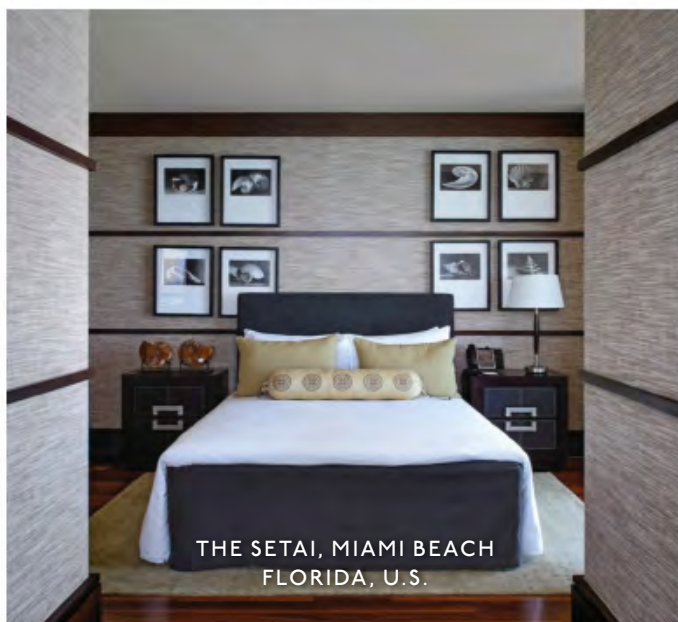




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Warmly Welcomed



smiley-face lamp) is a kitchen and living space, where breakfast is laid out on a communal table.

Every detail at this turn-of-the-20th-century town house is playful and unexpected. It was designed by architect Antonio Costa-Lopes and his wife, Filipa Fortunato, a children's-book author, who live on the top floor with their four children, ages five to 17. "We often talked about what we'd do when our kids left home," Filipa said, offering me a slice of plum cake. "Instead of rattling around an empty house arguing, we thought, *We must have lots of guests.*" They've also filled the soaring rooms with family heirlooms, modern art, and designer treasures collected during 20 years of marriage. Even the bathrooms, blessed with luxuriant tubs, are a celebration of color, pattern, and texture.

Every morning, there's a complimentary yoga class in a fragrant, chipboard-clad studio. The library, where the Fortunato kids take piano lessons, has picture windows for gazing at the ebb and flow of life in Amoreiras, a vibrant neighborhood favored by financial and creative companies. You don't just feel part of the community—you feel like you've been invited to the coolest house party in Lisbon. *casafortunato.com*; doubles from \$440.

ONE PALÁCIO DA ANUNCIADA

In its 16th-century heyday, the house One Palácio da Anunciada is set in contained 18,000 books and paintings by Rubens and Titian. Today there's nothing but a monumental bouquet of spring blossoms to distract from the frescoes and marble inlays in the foyer. Even the entrance to the hotel, on a narrow street just steps from

Avenida da Liberdade, Lisbon's Fifth Avenue, is discreet—so much so, in fact, that our taxi driver couldn't find it.

The palace had been abandoned for decades before the H10 Hotels group launched a rigorous renovation. It took a team of six experts three years to restore all of the original features. Photographs detailing this painstaking progress decorated our unabashedly modern bedroom, which was designed in a muted cookies-and-cream palette, with a carpet so plush you could curl up and sleep on it. A sweeping staircase with stained-glass windows leads to a trio of dining rooms with coffered, hand-painted 20-foot ceilings. French doors open onto a secluded garden, where daybeds are perfectly arranged around a glittering pool.

We dined in grand style at the Condes de Ericeira restaurant, where the bread basket is accompanied by edible flowers. I thought the formal atmosphere might be a little too much for my son, but he pronounced the One his favorite hotel in Lisbon. Why? "Because it's so fancy. And they have pink croissants." *hotelstheone.com*; doubles from \$283. ✦

▲
Casa Fortunato occupies a turn-of-the-century town house in the Amoreiras district.

▼
The pool at the One Palácio da Anunciada, a hotel in what was once a private mansion.





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TRAVELING WITH YOUR DOG:

PLANES, TRAINS, AND AUTOMOBILES

Pups are going places. Whether you're flying, driving, or taking a train, traveling with your dog has become more popular across the country and around the world. Here are tips to keep your BFF (best furry friend) happy on the go—and make transit less boring.

EASY FLIGHTS

Chic, luxurious, and multi-functional, today's pet carriers have come a long way. Choose one that's roomy enough for your dog to stand, sit, and turn around in. Get your pooch accustomed to the carrier with a few practice-runs before the trip and check airline restrictions for size and weight when you book your tickets. Also be sure to visit the vet for the right paperwork and shots, and to make sure that flying is a safe choice for your dog.

CAREFREE CAR RIDES

Long car rides can be especially dull for dogs. Even if you're loving the freedom of the road, your dog is wondering where the next dog park is. Do your

research on pet-friendly places to visit so that you can both get a break and stop for walks on longer stretches. A rawhide-free **Milk-Bone GnawBones®** dog treat helps clean teeth and makes the trip more enjoyable for both of you.

RAIL RULES

Riding the train with your dog has similar rules to flying with your dog: pay a fee and stow your carrier under your seat. While you can pass the time reading a book or binge-watching TV, those human activities are beyond boring for Spot. Keep your pet-pal stimulated and occupied with toys and treats like long-lasting **Milk-Bone Wonder Bones®**, dog treats designed to rock and wobble for paw-able fun.



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THE MOST PEACEFUL PLACE IN TOWN

Some travelers make a point of visiting famous gravestones; others find the idea macabre. For **JIM LEWIS**, cemeteries offer a fascinating glimpse of the way cities live—and a precious respite from their busy streets.

▲ *The Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris—one of the city's most popular attractions.*

BECAUSE I WAS the youngest child in a large, fractious family, I spent many of my formative years in search of solitude and silence. When I was eight, we moved from New Jersey to London, and since it was still the era of just-be-home-by-dinner, my parents would allow me to take off to a nearby playground after school. Once safely out of sight, I would hurry past the swing sets to my real destination—a small

cemetery next to St. John's Wood Church. There I would sit and read for a few hours, absolutely happy and absolutely alone.

I've loved cemeteries ever since, and when I travel, I try to find one in whatever city I visit. Many people do, of course, but I don't go for the usual reason: to see the final resting place of somebody well-known. I prefer abandoned places, filled with what the English poet Thomas Gray referred to as "the short and simple annals of the poor." And more than that, I go for the quiet, the beauty, the sidelong insight into the lives of the city's residents, the space they carve out of their daily lives for the dead, and the memories they hope to leave behind.

Almost every major city has one major cemetery, prominent or hidden—Highgate in London, Père Lachaise in Paris—though New York City, curiously, does not. Manhattan has a few small graveyards, but none to spend an afternoon in, and the vast burying grounds of Brooklyn and Queens remain fairly anonymous.

I've visited burial grounds both modest and magnificent, strange and familiar: dusty catacombs in Naples and decaying mummies in Guanajuato, Mexico; tiny graveyards on the Nebraska plains, holding westbound settlers who perished along the way, their final resting place marked with hastily erected wrought-iron crosses; and the American Cemetery in Normandy, where I once happened upon the marker of a World War II soldier with the same name as me.

I locate graveyards before I set off, mark them on my maps, admire them at my leisure. The Colón Cemetery in Havana, for example, has dense rows of elaborate and well-maintained mausoleums interspersed with neglected ruins. With its sections laid out like city blocks, each ward stratified by occupation, class, age, and so on, the Colón is oddly inimical to modern Cuban society. It's anything but egalitarian, but it's still much-loved.



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From left: Havana's Colón Cemetery; the American Cemetery in Normandy, France.

On the east side of Cairo is a vast cemetery that has been there since the seventh century. Ask a cabdriver to take you to the City of the Dead, and he'll dart through traffic to an unexpectedly quiet neighborhood, made quieter still by the pitiless heat, and drop you solemnly at the gates. Inside, you'll find not just mile upon mile of tombs and monuments but as many as half a million Cairenes, very much alive, who have taken up residence inside the crypts and vaults. Victims of the city's perpetual housing shortage, they occupy the only real estate they can find. In some spots you'll see electricity and water siphoned off from Cairo's grid, dogs roaming and children playing, schools and a post office.

Once, while I was on a motorcycle trip from Kathmandu, Nepal, over the Himalayas to Lhasa, I pulled off the road on the Tibetan Plateau, some 18,000 feet above sea level, to visit a sky burial site. Up there, where the ground is too hard to dig a grave and fuel too scarce to burn a body, deceased Buddhists are laid out for carrion birds to consume, a kind of natural recycling process. The ceremony itself is considered too private to allow for onlookers, but the spots where it's performed are easy to find: look for prayer flags flying at the highest spot in the area.

Perhaps the most magnificent I've seen is the Piskaryovskoye Memorial Cemetery, a massive plot of land outside St. Petersburg. During World War II, some 500,000 Soviet citizens were buried there, in mass graves hurriedly dug in an enormous field. They were killed during the Nazi siege of the city, which lasted for 872 days. Today, the cemetery is an immaculately kept place. Unmarked interments are raised a foot or two off the ground, and a garden of rosebushes

lies in the middle. Small pieces of mica glitter in the sandy pathways. On the far side of the cemetery stands a monument to Mother Russia, where Chopin's funeral march plays softly from loudspeakers hidden in the trees. Other than that, there wasn't a sound, and on the entire 70 acres I saw only two or three visitors aside from myself. But I returned to St. Petersburg having gained a sense of how stoic the city is, and how haunted, even today, when coffee shops line the streets and tourist buses crowd around the museums downtown.

Is this morbid, this hobby of mine? It doesn't feel that way to me. On the contrary, I find visiting cemeteries restorative and vivifying, little miracles of landscape design, and sacred not so much because they house the dead as because they provide a rich silence. We travel, at least in part, to lose ourselves, to be spectral, invisible, and anonymous in someone else's hometown. I've never found a better way to feel that than by walking among these memorials to the forgotten, these quiet ghosts, the dead in all their finery. ✚

Touring Famous Burial Grounds

Let members of the A-List, T+L's collection of the world's top travel advisors, help you plan an in-depth visit to these iconic resting places.

HIGHGATE CEMETERY, LONDON

Ellen LeCompte (ellen@lecomptetravel.com; 804-510-0608) can organize tours of this 37-acre landmark on the outskirts of Hampstead Heath. Your guide will talk you through the evolution of cemeteries in Victorian England and point out the memorials of famous residents, from Karl Marx to George Michael.

COLÓN CEMETERY, HAVANA

Tucked away in the Vedado neighborhood, Colón Cemetery contains more than 500 mausoleums and tombstones in a range of architectural styles. **Joe Sandillo** (joe@almazjourneys.com; 813-682-1959) arranges private tours, highlighting the graves of Cuban political figures and wealthy pre-Revolution families.

GANDEN MONASTERY, TIBET

Guy Rubin (guy@imperialtours.net; 86-108-440-7162) can schedule a tour of this monastery, which is located on a peak an hour outside the Tibetan capital of Lhasa. Outsiders are permitted to visit the sky burial site, where altars and tools are on display against a backdrop of Buddhist prayer flags and panoramic views of the Himalayas.



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AMERICAN CHARMER 3 PERFECT DAYS IN THE LOWCOUNTRY

With 12 miles of beaches and more than 250 restaurants, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, is easy to get to but feels miles away from it all. Soak up the Lowcountry lifestyle with these small-town gems.

Day 1

Check into your hotel and head over to **A Lowcountry Backyard Restaurant** for house specialties such as shrimp and grits, potato chip meatloaf (also available in sandwich form), and yummy banana pudding. Next, rent bikes from **Pelican Cruiser** and pedal over to the candy-cane striped **Harbour Town Lighthouse**. Bike to **Coligny Beach** to kick back on the sand, and stop off at **Tiki Hut** for live music and cocktails like the Local's Jam with bourbon, lemonade, and raspberry puree. For dinner, try refined Southern country food at **Lucky Rooster Kitchen + Bar**.

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Day 2

Head to historic **Bluffton** for its laid-back charm. Start at **The Cottage**, a cozy spot serving breakfast staples and signature Benedicts like the Crabby Bernice, made with crab cakes, poached eggs, and hollandaise. Step back in time at the **Heyward House**, a 19th-century landmark home that doubles as the welcome center, and get legit chicken and waffles at **Cahill's Market and Chicken Kitchen**. Back in Hilton Head Island, pony up for a late-afternoon trail ride at **Lawton Stables**. At sunset, take in the view from **The Old Oyster Factory** with oysters and wine.

Day 3

Check out art for sale on the walls of **The French Bakery** and enjoy breakfast classics, including sweet and savory crêpes, omelets, and French toast topped with everything from peach strudel to Grand Marnier. Book a boat tour from the **Coastal Discovery Museum** to **Daufuskie Island** to explore the area's Native American and Gullah roots. On the island, hop into a golf cart to follow a guide to points of interest, such as **The First African Baptist Church** and **The Daufuskie Island Rum Company**. Afterwards, browse for authentic handicrafts at **Gullah Sweetgrass Basket Creations**. In the evening, try **Red Fish** for dinner.



ADVERTISEMENT

EUROPEAN MARVEL 3 PERFECT DAYS IN ITALY

With its terracotta roofs and cobblestone streets, Florence is an old-world metropolis with a youthful zeal for food, fashion, and culture. As cities go, it's an absolute masterpiece.

Day 1

Embrace the day with freshly baked bread and goodies like *budino di riso* (Florentine rice-pudding tart) at **S.forno**, tucked on a side street in the hip San Frediano neighborhood. They bake on-site and have delish paninis for lunch. Once you've carb-loaded, stroll across the Arno River via the Ponte Vecchio ("Old Bridge") and spend a few hours at **The Uffizi Galleries**. Then recharge with gelato at **Perchè No!**, which actually means "why not," and cover the must-see sights like the **Palazzo Vecchio** and **Duomo**. In the evening, hop on a train to the family-run **Trattoria Da Burde**.


Day 2

Cross to the "other side of the river," or Oltrarno, for local gems. Walk to the **Palazzo Pitti** and its gorgeous **Boboli Gardens**, filled with flowers, fountains, and old oak trees. Then fully immerse yourself in the dolce vita with lunch at **Osteria dell'Enoteca**, offering a stellar wine list and Florentine steaks, as well as regional specialties like cheese-and-spinach-filled *crepelle gratinate*. Afterwards, choose between your fill of art at the **Museo Bardini**—or sipping coffee on one of the prettiest squares in the city at **Caffè degli Artigiani**. Cap off the day with river views at **La Terrazza Bar**.

Day 3

Have a casual breakfast at **Le Vespe Café**, situated a short walk from the **Basilica di Santa Croce**. Treasure hunt at the **Sant'Ambrogio Market**, selling everything from fresh food to electronics, and the **Piazza Annigoni Market**, filled with antiques and old books. For lunch, head to the buzzy **Cibrè Trattoria** and then get a dose of rococo and dessert at **Dolci e Dolcezze**. Meander through the shops on the famous **Via de' Tornabuoni** and visit **Benheart**, a hip boutique for leather. Finally, treat yourself to truffle gnocchi for dinner at **Osteria Santo Spirito**.

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Travel + Leisure

The World's Best Awards



You, our discerning readers, never cease to inspire us as you travel farther and deeper each year. For the 24th edition of our annual survey, we asked you to rate cities, islands, hotels, airlines, and more. Hundreds of thousands of you answered the call. Cheers to you—and all this year's honorees.

EDITED BY SARAH BRUNING



WORLD'S BEST AWARDS 2019 **CITIES**

NO. 1 CITY IN THE WORLD

Paper lanterns float down Hoi An's Thu Bon River during one of the city's monthly full-moon festivals.



WANT MORE WORLD'S BEST AWARDS? Head to [travelandleisure.com/worlds-best](https://www.travelandleisure.com/worlds-best) for photos, extended lists, and videos.



YADID LEVY

Cities

Mexico claims an impressive three places on the global Top 10, and in Asia and Oceania, two one-of-a-kind metropolises snag the top spots for the first time: historic Hoi An, Vietnam, and adventure destination Queenstown, New Zealand.

TOP 10
CITIES
OVERALL

- 1 **Hoi An**
Vietnam 90.39

The enchanting port city leaps from last year's No. 8 spot on the strength of its artisanal goods, innovative cuisine, and historic Vietnamese architecture, which incorporates Asian and French influences.
- 2 **San Miguel de Allende**
Mexico 90.23
- 3 **Chiang Mai**
Thailand 89.56
- 4 **Mexico City**
89.30
- 5 **Oaxaca**
Mexico 89.16
- 6 **Ubud**
Indonesia 89.08
- 7 **Tokyo**
88.95
- 8 **Kyoto**
Japan 88.42
- 9 **Florence**
88.26 ★
- 10 **Udaipur**
India 87.80

TOP 10
CITIES
UNITED STATES

- 1 **Charleston**
South Carolina 87.04 ★

For the seventh year in a row, this Southern belle stands above the rest, charming travelers with Lowcountry hospitality, picturesque streets, and a culinary scene that ranges from casual barbecue to refined tasting menus.
- 2 **Santa Fe**
New Mexico 86.59 ★
- 3 **New Orleans**
86.06 ★
- 4 **Savannah**
Georgia 84.98
- 5 **New York City**
84.04 ★
- 6 **Chicago**
83.25 ★
- 7 **Nashville**
82.57
- 8 **Asheville**
North Carolina 81.79
- 9 **Austin**
Texas 81.31
- 10 **Honolulu**
81.30

TOP 5
CITIES
CENTRAL AND
SOUTH AMERICA

- 1 **Cuzco**
Peru 85.66 ★

Though it serves as the launchpad for excursions to Machu Picchu, this ancient destination's colonial architecture and welcoming locals prove it merits more than a brief pass-through.
- 2 **Antigua**
Guatemala 83.26
- 3 **Buenos Aires**
82.92 ★
- 4 **Mendoza**
Argentina 82.53
- 5 **Quito**
Ecuador 82.22

TOP 5
CITIES
MEXICO

- 1 **San Miguel de Allende**
90.23

Travelers keep returning to the colorful buildings and cobblestoned lanes of this colonial

enclave, beloved for its centuries of history and unusual arts heritage.

- 2 Mexico City**
89.30 ★
- 3 Oaxaca**
89.16
- 4 Mérida**
85.70
- 5 Guadalajara**
84.49

TOP 5

CITIES
CANADA

- 1 Quebec City**
84.49 ★

Now in its fourth consecutive year as the most loved Canadian city, Quebec's capital can't be beat for old-world flair and Winter Carnival.

- 2 Vancouver**
82.58
- 3 Montreal**
82.23
- 4 Victoria**
British Columbia
82.10
- 5 Toronto**
80.52

TOP 10

CITIES
EUROPE

- 1 Florence**
88.26 ★

This capital of the Renaissance has reigned as category winner since 2014, thanks to superlative historic sites and museums (the Duomo, the Uffizi, Galleria dell'Accademia) and delicious Tuscan cuisine.

NO. 1 CITY IN EUROPE

Pitti Palace, just outside the Boboli Gardens' main entrance, exemplifies the Renaissance architecture of Florence.



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- 2 **Rome**
87.34 ★
- 3 **Seville**
Spain 86.65
- 4 **Barcelona**
86.47 ★
- 5 **Porto**
Portugal 86.35
- 6 **Lisbon**
86.25
- 7 **Siena**
Italy 85.88
- 8 **Kraków**
Poland 85.80
- 9 **Istanbul**
85.75 ★
- 10 **San Sebastián**
Spain 85.48

TOP 5
CITIES
AFRICA AND
THE MIDDLE EAST

- 1 **Cape Town**
85.86 ★

With its sumptuous hotels, destination museums like the Zeitz MOCAA, and proximity to world-class wine regions, South Africa's oldest city is a category favorite for an impressive 18th time.
- 2 **Jerusalem**
85.46 ★
- 3 **Marrakesh**
Morocco 85.11
- 4 **Beirut**
Lebanon 84.48
- 5 **Fez**
Morocco 82.98

TOP 10
CITIES
ASIA

- 1 **Hoi An**
Vietnam 90.39

A new spirit of innovation across the colonial city's arts and culinary scenes has made this a distinctive, must-visit urban destination.
- 2 **Chiang Mai**
Thailand 89.56
- 3 **Ubud**
Indonesia 89.08
- 4 **Tokyo**
88.95 ★
- 5 **Kyoto**
Japan 88.42 ★
- 6 **Udaipur**
India 87.80

- 7 **Bangkok**
86.52 ★
- 8 **Osaka**
Japan 86.32
- 9 **Siem Reap**
Cambodia 86.21 ★
- 10 **Jaipur**
India 86.17

TOP 5
CITIES
AUSTRALIA,
NEW ZEALAND, AND
THE SOUTH PACIFIC

- 1 **Queenstown**
New Zealand 84.96

Outdoor activities, from skiing and mountain biking in the Southern Alps to parasailing on Lake Wakatipu, make this scenic Kiwi hub a year-round magnet for adventure seekers.

- 2 **Sydney**
84.92 ★
- 3 **Melbourne**
83.88 ★
- 4 **Perth**
Australia 82.10
- 5 **Wellington**
New Zealand 80.47

NO. 1 CITY IN
AFRICA AND THE
MIDDLE EAST

Hiking up Table Mountain is a popular Cape Town activity.



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Beverly Hills, California, USA



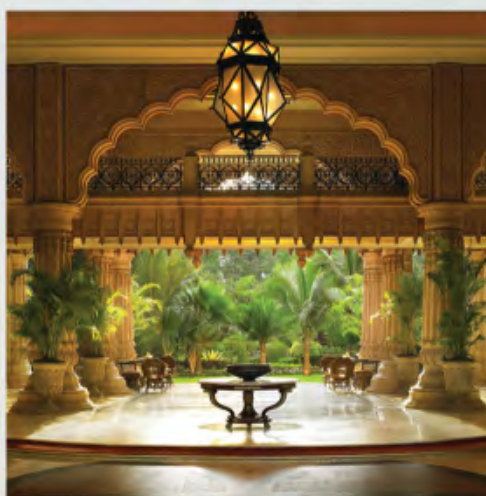
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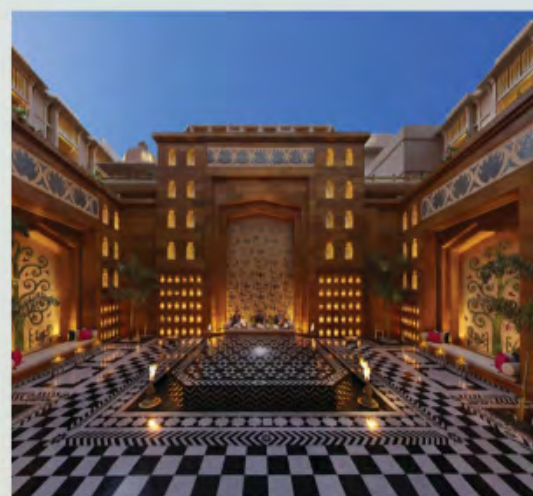
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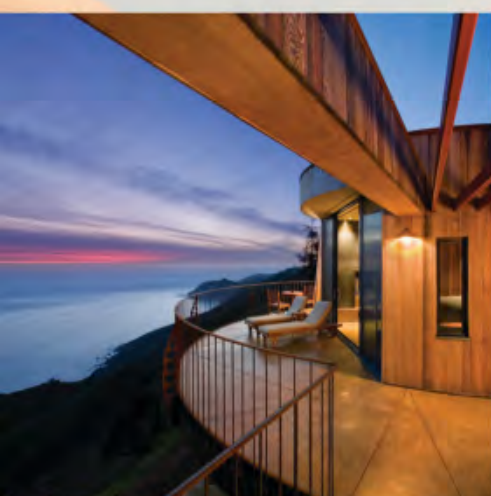
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Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo, Guerrero, Mexico



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Bengaluru, India



THE LEEA PALACE UDAIPUR
Udaipur, India



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Islands

The islands favored by T+L readers are more varied and geographically diverse than ever, spanning mellow beach escapes, mountainous hiking destinations, wellness hubs, and emerging wine regions.

TOP 10 ISLANDS OVERALL

1 Sri Lanka 92.12

Even as it heals from the Easter Sunday attacks, this vibrant nation continues to captivate readers with its wildlife parks, tea plantations, and eclectic cities.

2 Palawan Philippines 90.87

3 Bali Indonesia 90.76 ★

4 Mílos Greece 90.50

5 Maldives 90.48

6 Anguilla 90.28

7 Crete Greece 90.12

8 Cape Breton Island Nova Scotia 90.06

9 Koh Lanta Thailand 90.00

10 Azores Portugal 89.77

NO. 1 ISLAND IN THE WORLD

Stilt fishing is one of the distinctively Sri Lankan traditions travelers to the country will observe.

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TOP 10
ISLANDS
CONTINENTAL U.S.

- 1

Hilton Head
South Carolina
85.83

This picturesque, family-friendly barrier island, known for its easygoing vibe, sets the standard for American beach getaways.
- 2

Mount Desert Island
Maine 85.53
- 3

Cumberland Island
Georgia 84.83
- 4

Golden Isles (Jekyll Island, Little St. Simons Island, Sea Island, St. Simons Island)
Georgia 84.00
- 5

Mackinac Island
Michigan 82.26
- 6

Nantucket
Massachusetts
82.22
- 7

Florida Keys
81.72
- 8

Amelia Island
Florida 81.49
- 9

Outer Banks
North Carolina 81.44
- 10

Kiawah Island
South Carolina
80.80

TOP 5
ISLANDS
HAWAII

- 1

Maui
88.32 ★

The Valley Isle—now in its eighth year as category winner—spoils visitors for choice when it comes to natural wonders, from rain forests to coves teeming with sea life.

- 2

Kauai
87.25 ★
- 3

Big Island
85.93 ★
- 4

Oahu
84.72
- 5

Lanai
78.93

TOP 5
ISLANDS
MEXICO AND
CENTRAL AND
SOUTH AMERICA

- 1

Galápagos Islands
Ecuador 88.73 ★

Securing the top spot for the 17th consecutive year, the Ecuadoran archipelago is rightly championed for its biodiversity, which is best appreciated on an expedition cruise.
- 2

Easter Island
Chile 84.50
- 3

Isla Mujeres
Mexico 82.95 ★
- 4

Ambergris Cay
Belize 80.74 ★
- 5

Caye Caulker
Belize 80.37

TOP 3
ISLANDS
CANADA

- 1

Cape Breton Island
Nova Scotia 90.06

On the northeastern tip of the province, this escape has made the list for four years running, thanks to its coastal hiking trails and abundant whale-watching opportunities.
- 2

Vancouver Island
British Columbia
83.54 ★

- 3

Prince Edward Island
81.74

TOP 10
ISLANDS
THE CARIBBEAN,
BERMUDA, AND THE
BAHAMAS

- 1

Anguilla
90.28

Thirty-three spectacular white-sand beaches and some

of the region's best resorts have kept this laid-back paradise at No. 1 since 2017.

- 2

St. Vincent and the Grenadines
87.67
- 3

Vieques
Puerto Rico 87.52
- 4

Abacos Islands
Bahamas 86.15
- 5

St. Lucia
85.94

- 6

St. John
U.S. Virgin Islands
85.47 ★
- 7

Virgin Gorda
British Virgin Islands 84.84 ★
- 8

Harbour Island
Bahamas 84.70
- 9

Grenada
84.65
- 10

St. Bart's
84.24



**NO. 1 ISLAND IN THE CARIBBEAN,
BERMUDA, AND THE BAHAMAS**

Garvey's Sunshine Shack, located on Rendezvous Bay, captures the breezy ambience that keeps readers coming back to Anguilla.

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► **NO. 1 ISLAND
IN EUROPE**

Striking volcanic scenery and minimal crowds are key to Mílos's appeal.

TOP 15
ISLANDS
EUROPE

- 1 Mílos**
Greece 90.50

A jewel among the Cycladic islands, this history-rich oasis—a first-time winner—is ideal for travelers looking for ancient wonders and great beaches.
- 2 Crete**
Greece 90.12
- 3 Azores**
Portugal 89.77
- 4 Páros**
Greece 89.37
- 5 Santorini**
Greece 88.53 ★
- 6 Sicily**
Italy 88.12
- 7 Hvar and the Dalmatian Islands**
Croatia 86.46
- 8 Madeira**
Portugal 86.15
- 9 Sardinia**
Italy 85.96
- 10 Lipari and the Aeolian Islands**
Italy 85.71
- 11 Ischia**
Italy 85.50
- 12 Mallorca**
Spain 85.11
- 13 Skye and the Hebrides**
Scotland 84.95
- 14 Malta**
84.17
- 15 Orkney Islands**
Scotland 84.00

TOP 3
ISLANDS
AFRICA AND
THE MIDDLE EAST

- 1 Seychelles**
84.95

Though the journey there is long, this archipelago in the Indian Ocean delivers both resort-based relaxation (open-air spas) and natural splendor (swimming with whale sharks).
- 2 Zanzibar**
Tanzania 79.64
- 3 Mauritius**
77.87

TOP 10
ISLANDS
ASIA

- 1 Sri Lanka**
92.12

While there's no denying the draw of the ocean, the country offers many inland pleasures, from leopard safaris to lush tea plantations where many of the most luxurious resorts can be found.
- 2 Palawan**
Philippines 90.87
- 3 Bali**
Indonesia 90.76 ★

- 4 Maldives**
90.48
- 5 Koh Lanta**
Thailand 90.00
- 6 Naoshima Island**
Japan 87.43
- 7 Cebu**
Philippines 87.09
- 8 Koh Samui**
Thailand 86.94
- 9 Boracay**
Philippines 86.90
- 10 Java**
Indonesia 85.88

TOP 5
ISLANDS
AUSTRALIA,
NEW ZEALAND, AND
THE SOUTH PACIFIC

- 1 Fiji Islands**
89.18

Seclusion and outstanding wildlife viewing are among the reasons travelers make the trek to the swank resorts of this 332-island nation in the South Pacific.
- 2 Moorea**
French Polynesia 87.67 ★
- 3 Waiheke Island**
New Zealand 87.48
- 4 Cook Islands**
87.41
- 5 Huahine**
French Polynesia 87.20



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Transportation

International carriers from the Middle East and Asia still reign, thanks to enhanced premium cabins and wellness initiatives. Close to home, Alaska Airlines' absorption of longtime winner Virgin America paved the way for JetBlue to get its first victory.



▲ NO. 1 DOMESTIC AIRLINE

JetBlue fliers love the comfortable leather seats and the flexible loyalty program.

TOP 5 DOMESTIC AIRLINES

1 JetBlue Airways 79.72 ★

After 10 years as runner-up, the airline beloved for its friendly service, straightforward boarding process, and cushy Mint class finally ascends to first place.

2 Alaska Airlines 78.21

3 Southwest Airlines 78.17 ★

4 Hawaiian Airlines 76.90 ★

5 Delta Air Lines 72.37

TOP 10 INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES

1 Singapore Airlines 89.28 ★

No carrier seems to exceed expectations quite like this one, which has

led the category for all 24 years of this survey's existence and remains an industry pace-setter with menus from Canyon Ranch and the world's longest nonstop flight from Newark to Singapore.

2 Emirates 88.55 ★

3 Qatar Airways 88.51 ★

4 Japan Airlines 86.57

5 Eva Air 85.65

6 Air New Zealand 85.31 ★

7 All Nippon Airways 84.90

8 Korean Air 83.91

9 Cathay Pacific Airways 83.36 ★

10 La Compagnie 83.30

Packed with such amenities as a 24-hour movie theater, Changi stands out as the rare airport where travelers don't mind spending lots of time—especially since the debut this past April of its retail and entertainment complex, Jewel, with the world's tallest indoor waterfall.

TOP 5 DOMESTIC AIRPORTS

1 Portland International Airport Oregon 80.84

PDX has topped the domestic list since the category's debut in 2014, in part by bringing in local vendors and making fliers' experience as pain-free as possible: you can even bike to the airport from downtown.

2 Indianapolis International Airport 78.55

3 Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport 78.44

4 Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport Georgia 76.99

5 Tampa International Airport Florida 76.34

2 Hamad International Airport Doha, Qatar 90.37

3 Dubai International 86.56

4 Incheon International Airport Seoul 85.90

5 Hong Kong International Airport 84.58

TOP 5 CAR-RENTAL COMPANIES

1 National Car Rental 79.95 ★

A vast and easily accessible fleet, paired with a seamless customer experience, is why this U.S.-based provider has beat out the competition for six consecutive years.

2 Enterprise Rent-A-Car 78.89 ★

3 Hertz 77.54 ★

4 Alamo 75.38

5 Sixt 73.52

TOP 5 INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS

1 Singapore Changi Airport 91.22

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FIND YOUR LOWCOUNTRY SOUL

Escape to Hilton Head Island and experience the authentic spirit of the Lowcountry. Reconnect with your soul in this seaside retreat, voted #1 Island in the Continental U.S. by *Travel + Leisure* readers every year since 2016.



HILTON HEAD ISLAND
South Carolina

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RELAX, RECHARGE, AND RECONNECT ON HILTON HEAD ISLAND.



From left to right:
Succulent local oysters;
Harbour Town Yacht
Basin; Robert Trent Jones
Course at Palmetto Dunes
Oceanfront Resort.

What does a Hilton Head Island

vacation look like? It's whatever you want it to be. A relaxing morning on an expansive beach. An afternoon out on the water or in a forest preserve. An evening savoring the mouth-watering flavors of Lowcountry cuisine.

Striking a balance between natural beauty, culture, and one-of-a-kind experiences, Hilton Head Island is a classic American resort destination with a modern spin. You'll find 12 miles of pristine beaches playing off the intercoastal waterways and creeks meandering through the destination. Disconnect from the hectic pace of everyday life and reconnect with your friends and family on the island *Travel + Leisure* readers voted #1 Island in the Continental U.S.

The warm, welcoming vibe becomes apparent the moment you cross the bridge, making it easy to switch straight into island time. Relax and enjoy an abundance of art, history, culture, local shops, and a culinary scene showcasing a fresh perspective on Southern coastal cuisine—along with genuine hospitality.

Hilton Head Island offers you a multitude of ways to relax, reconnect, and find your Lowcountry soul.

NATURAL BEAUTY

The nation's first eco-planned destination, Hilton Head Island was designed with nature in mind—water, beach, wildlife, and lush landscapes draw you in from every vantage point. To experience all that the destination has to offer, you'll want to explore it from every angle: get out on the water with one of the many water excursion offerings; explore the landscape on over 60 miles of pathways; bike along the wide, hard-packed sand; or visit one of the three local nature preserves.

BEACH CULTURE

Play in the sand, frolic in the surf, and bike or stroll along the sandy shores of the Atlantic Ocean. Hilton Head Island boasts more than 12 miles of some of the best beaches in the country—from South Beach to Folly



Field Beach, and every beach in between. It's no wonder Hilton Head Island is renowned as one of the country's most relaxing beach destinations—for kids of all ages.

SPORTY FUN

Showcasing more than 24 championship golf courses designed by some of the most renowned golf architects in the country, Hilton Head Island is the ultimate destination for improving your game, whether you're an experienced player or just learning. You'll also find a plethora of great tennis courts, plus courts for pickleball, an addictive hybrid racquet sport.

COASTAL COOL

With a strong connection to the sea, Hilton Head Island has six marinas, each with its own character, shops, restaurants, and waterfront views. At the Coastal Discovery Museum, a Smithsonian affiliate, explore nature and history with kid-friendly programs and guided tours

ADVERTISEMENT

on land and sea. Walk along trails on the 68-acre Honey Horn property or go on a nature cruise to see dolphins playing in the waves.

VIBRANT HISTORY

Hilton Head Island has beckoned explorers for centuries—with Native Americans, European colonists, African-Americans, and soldiers all leaving their mark. Dig into this diverse history with a Zion Living History Tour or Historic Bike Tour available through the Heritage Library, or visit Mitchelville, the first self-governed town of freed slaves in America. Wherever you go, you'll notice much of the landscape still resembles the island that was first sighted from Captain William Hilton's ship more than 350 years ago.

CULINARY FINDS

The flavors of the Lowcountry shine on Hilton Head Island thanks to an abundance of fresh local ingredients. Dig into fresh seafood dockside at a casual restaurant. Dine by candlelight in an elegant dining room. Or indulge in Lowcountry favorites like oysters, gumbo, or peel-and-eat shrimp. With more than 250 restaurants to choose from, there's something delicious for every palate.

For more information, go to hiltonheadisland.org.



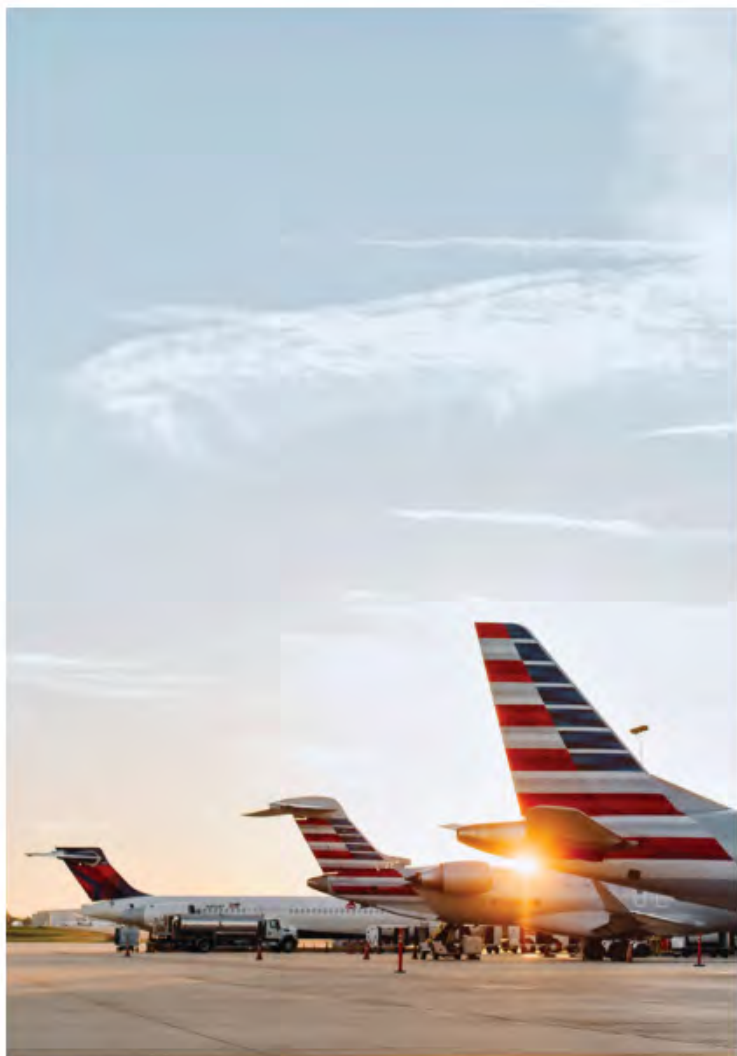
SCAN to uncover more of what makes Hilton Head Island a World's Best Award-winning destination. Simply open your phone camera and hover over the QR code to connect.



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ARRIVE IN STYLE

Whether it's a last-minute romantic getaway or a well-planned family vacation, Hilton Head Island is easy to get to.



REST YOUR HEAD

Full service luxury hotel offerings are easy to find on Hilton Head Island, home to some of the top resorts on the East Coast. Or, if you prefer the privacy of a rental home or villa, you'll find endless options for a quick getaway, golf outing, or large family gathering. The destination's wide variety of accommodation offerings allows you to rest easy when choosing where to stay.



AIRPORT CHECK-IN

Whether it's a quick weekend getaway or a well-planned family vacation, the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport (SAV) will get you there with ease. From seamless hotel transfers and convenient car rentals to a well-staffed visitor's center and boutique shopping, SAV offers major airport convenience in the heart of the southeast coast. Voted among the top five airports in the United States by *Travel + Leisure* readers, Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport caters to today's travelers and makes getting to Hilton Head Island effortless with plenty of nonstop flights from major cities around the country.

Situated just 40 short minutes from Hilton Head Island, this welcoming gateway to the soul of the Lowcountry exemplifies Southern charm and convenience. The moment you land, you'll notice the Southern hospitality—from friendly airport staff to rocking chairs that are great for kicking back for a few minutes. Before your flight home, you'll find places to grab your favorite blend of coffee, have an ice cream from a century-old local fave, or sip a handcrafted brew while listening to live music from local performers that often welcome travelers in the lobby.

From landing to take off, SAV provides an all-around excellent airport experience. For more information, go to flySAV.com.



Scan for a sneak peek at how easy it is to begin your Hilton Head Island vacation when you book a flight to SAV. Simply open your phone camera and hover over the QR code to explore additional content.



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Travel+Leisure World's Best Collection Trip: Napa | October 2019

Each year, Travel+Leisure readers vote in the World's Best Awards, selecting their favorite properties and places. Now it's your turn to travel with us, guided by Travel+Leisure Editor-in-Chief Jacqui Gifford, and wine & spirits Editor Ray Isle. For trip details, go to travelandleisure.com/napatrip

Cruise Lines

No matter their fleet size, the cruise lines winning readers' hearts are continuously finding ways to innovate. For some, like Disney, that means launching new destinations and ships. For others, including Paul Gauguin, it's all about developing excursions that take travelers even deeper into the locales they're visiting.

NO. 1 MEGA-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINE

Disney Cruise Line's exclusive experiences, such as a visit to the company's private island, Castaway Cay, propelled it to the top.

TOP 10 MEGA-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

1 Disney Cruise Line 87.34 ★

The Mouse's magic is still powerful at sea, as proven by its high-energy, family-friendly fleet, which will begin sailings from New Orleans next year and add three new vessels by 2023.

2 Cunard 85.71 ★

3 Holland America Line 85.34 ★

4 Princess Cruises 83.88 ★

5 Celebrity Cruises 83.03 ★

6 Royal Caribbean International 78.96 ★

7 Norwegian Cruise Line 77.78

8 Carnival Cruise Line 75.88

9 Costa Cruises 75.86

10 MSC Cruises 75.07

TOP 10 LARGE-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

1 Viking 94.31

Spacious state-rooms and culturally enriching excursions have kept this line in first place since it

launched ocean voyages in 2015.

2 Crystal Cruises 92.75 ★

3 Seabourn 92.36 ★

4 Regent Seven Seas Cruises 91.53 ★

5 Oceania Cruises 86.45 ★

6 Cunard 85.99 ★

7 Azamara Club Cruises 84.48 ★

8 Silversea Cruises 84.01 ★

9 Princess Cruises 83.11 ★

10 Hurtigruten 81.74

TOP 5 MIDSIZE-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

1 Paul Gauguin Cruises 92.97

All it took for this South Pacific specialist to emerge victorious: one elegant ship with a range of tours, which could include anything from an off-road safari in a volcanic crater on Moorea to a visit to a black-pearl farm on Taha'a.

2 Seabourn 92.09 ★

3 Windstar Cruises 91.88

4 Regent Seven Seas Cruises 90.38 ★

5 Ponant 88.63

TOP 10 SMALL-SHIP OCEAN CRUISE LINES

1 Quasar Expeditions 99.07

The Ecuadoran company operates just two vessels





COURTESY OF DISNEY CRUISE LINE

(fun fact: one belonged to Grace Kelly), allowing it to facilitate intimate trips that show off the natural splendor of the Galápagos Islands.

- 2 Crystal Cruises**
96.72 ★
- 3 Ecoventura**
96.69
- 4 Grand Circle Cruise Line**
96.60

- 5 Australis Cruise Lines**
92.82
- 6 Windstar Cruises**
91.75
- 7 Lindblad Expeditions–National Geographic**
91.24
- 8 SeaDream Yacht Club**
91.15
- 9 Silversea Cruises**
90.00 ★

- 10 UnCruise Adventures**
88.69

TOP 10 RIVER CRUISE LINES

- 1 Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection**
95.54 ★
- Never one to rest on its laurels, the repeat winner—

which christened the Bordeaux-based *Bon Voyage* this year—plans to launch four more new ships in 2020.

- 2 Tauck River Cruising**
95.42 ★
- 3 Crystal River Cruises**
95.39
- 4 Viking**
94.18 ★

- 5 Scenic Luxury Cruises & Tours**
93.29
- 6 Grand Circle Cruise Line**
93.22
- 7 Emerald Waterways**
92.28
- 8 Vantage Deluxe World Travel**
91.98
- 9 U River Cruises**
91.94
- 10 Avalon Waterways**
89.53



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UBUD, INDONESIA



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vikingcruises.com

Ship size category: 600–2,199 guests

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Nordic-Inspired Spa



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Destination Spas

This year's honorees attend to guests' emotional well-being as much as they do their physical health. Local ingredients and traditions inform services and enhance each spa's connection to its setting.

NO. 1 DOMESTIC SPA

Mii Amo's minimalist adobe buildings harmonize with the famed red rocks of Sedona, Arizona.

TOP 10 DOMESTIC SPAS

- 1 Mii Amo**
Sedona, Arizona
94.57 ★
The intimate casitas and creative programming—vision-board making, watercolor painting, beading—at this Sedona hideaway captivate guests.
- 2 Cal-a-Vie Health Spa**
Vista, California
94.19
- 3 Sunrise Springs Spa Resort**
Santa Fe, New Mexico 93.22
- 4 Miraval Arizona Resort & Spa**
Tucson, Arizona
92.89

- 5 Ojo Caliente Mineral Springs Resort & Spa**
Ojo Caliente, New Mexico 91.98
- 6 The Ranch**
Malibu, California
91.12
- 7 Lake Austin Spa Resort**
Austin, Texas
90.13 ★
- 8 Ten Thousand Waves Japanese Spa & Resort**
Santa Fe, New Mexico 89.48
- 9 Lodge at Woodloch**
Hawley, Pennsylvania 88.96
- 10 Canyon Ranch Wellness Resort**
Lenox, Massachusetts
88.00

TOP 5 INTERNATIONAL SPAS

- 1 Andronis Concept Wellness Resort**
Santorini, Greece
98.18
Offering activities like catamaran excursions and sunset yoga overlooking Santorini's volcanic cliffs, this 28-suite newcomer marries true relaxation with the deep sense of place that modern travelers crave.
- 2 Rancho La Puerta**
Tecate, Mexico
95.65 ★
- 3 Chablé Resort & Spa**
Chocholá, Mexico
95.37
- 4 Mountain Trek Fitness Retreat & Health Spa**
Ainsworth Hot Springs, British Columbia 94.79
- 5 BodyHoliday**
St. Lucia 91.28



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**NO. 1 SAFARI
OUTFITTER**

In Tanzania, African Travel, Inc. often arranges hot-air-balloon safaris over the Serengeti.



Safari Outfitters and Tour Operators

As travelers continue to prize personalization and immersive experiences, companies with deep regional expertise and connections that grant their clients unparalleled access are winning big.

TOP 10 SAFARI OUTFITTERS

1 African Travel, Inc. 99.78

The experts at this family-owned company continually find ways to surprise and delight, whether it's planning a canoe safari in Zimbabwe's Mana Pools National Park or arranging a visit to a local home-stead after a trip to Victoria Falls.

2 Roar Africa 99.05

3 Micato Safaris 98.31 ★

4 Deeper Africa 97.50

5 Rothschild Safaris 97.14

6 Thomson Safaris 97.08

7 Extraordinary Journeys 96.97

8 Travel Beyond 96.74

9 andBeyond 95.65

10 Africa Adventure Consultants 95.63

TOP 10 TOUR OPERATORS

1 Classic Journeys 98.23

Offering itineraries in 50 countries and counting, this company excels on a global level, tailoring trips to places as close as Washington State's San Juan Islands and as far as Nepal.

2 Gray & Co.—Private Active Journeys 97.89

3 Wild Frontiers Adventure Travel 97.65

4 Scott Dunn 97.38

5 Terra Incognita Ecotours 97.18

6 Jacada Travel 97.02

7 MT Sobek 97.01

8 InsideJapan Tours 96.98

9 TCS World Travel 96.77

10 Thomson Family Adventures 96.65

3:04 PM

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NO. 1 HOTEL IN THE WORLD

Guests arrive at the Jeffrey Wilkes and Bill Bensley–designed Leela Palace Udaipur via private boat.

Best Hotels in the World

As in past years, the United States boasts the most hotels among readers' favorites, with 17 properties making the list. South Africa comes in second with eight, including a handful of superlative safari lodges. But it was a lakeside property in India that shot to the top.

TOP 100 HOTELS OVERALL

- 1 Leela Palace**
Udaipur, India 98.89

Rajasthan's Lake Pichola provides a stunning backdrop for this lavish property, where guests unwind with ayurvedic spa treatments and time in the grand pool.
- 2 Lodge & Spa at Brush Creek Ranch**
Saratoga, Wyoming 98.67

- 3 Singita Sabi Sand**
Sabi Sands Game Reserve, South Africa 98.59
- 4 Farm at Cape Kidnappers**
Hawke's Bay, New Zealand 98.57
- 5 Gibb's Farm**
Karatu, Tanzania 98.56
- 6 JW Marriott Phu Quoc Emerald Bay Resort & Spa**
Vietnam 98.56
- 7 The Mulia**
Bali, Indonesia 98.25
- 8 Singita Grumeti**
Serengeti National Park, Tanzania 98.12

- 9 Bushcamp Company's Mfuwe Lodge**
South Luangwa National Park, Zambia 97.87
- 9 Lapa Rios Lodge**
Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica 97.87
- 9 Rosewood**
Beijing 97.87
- 12 Royal Mansour**
Marrakesh, Morocco 97.78
- 12 Turtle Island**
Fiji 97.78
- 14 Six Senses**
Yao Noi, Thailand 97.74
- 15 Tierra Patagonia**
Torres del Paine, Chile 97.65

- 16 Ellerman House**
Cape Town 97.60
- 17 Canaves Oia Epitome**
Santorini, Greece 97.58
- 18 Hotel Matilda**
San Miguel de Allende, Mexico 97.54
- 19 Resort at Pedregal**
Cabo San Lucas, Mexico 97.51
- 20 Londolozi**
Sabi Sands Game Reserve, South Africa 97.45
- 21 Southern Ocean Lodge**
Kangaroo Island, Australia 97.43
- 22 J.K. Place Firenze**
Florence 97.27

SIVAN ASKAYO

- 23

The Oberoi
Mumbai 97.25

24

Inn at Willow Grove
Orange,
Virginia 97.22

25

Vines Resort & Spa
Mendoza,
Argentina 97.20

26

Gangtey Lodge
Phobjikha Valley,
Bhutan 97.18

27

Rabbit Hill Inn
Lower Waterford,
Vermont 96.89

27

**Rosewood
Mayakoba**
Playa del Carmen,
Mexico 96.89

29

The Highlands
Ngorongoro
Conservation Area,
Tanzania 96.84

30

Shore Club
Turks and Caicos
96.79

31

Leela Palace
New Delhi 96.69

32

**Saxon Hotel,
Villas & Spa**
Johannesburg,
South Africa
96.63 ★

33

**Inn of the
Five Graces**
Santa Fe,
New Mexico 96.62

34

**Lion Sands
Game Reserve**
Sabi Sands Game
Reserve,
South Africa 96.60

35

**Las Ventanas
al Paraíso, a
Rosewood Resort**
San José del Cabo,
Mexico 96.56

36

Hotel Eleven
Austin,
Texas 96.55

37

Six Senses Laamu
Olhuveli Island,
Maldives 96.50

38

Taj Lake Palace
Udaipur,
India 96.48

39

Nihi Sumba
Sumba Island,
Indonesia 96.46

40

Six Senses
Malolo Island,
Fiji 96.44

41

**Grace Hotel
Santorini, Auberge
Resorts Collection**
Greece 96.40

41

Sol y Luna
Sacred Valley,
Peru 96.40

43

**Grand Hotel Villa
Serbelloni**
Lake Como,
Italy 96.33

44

**Row Hotel at
Assembly Row**

Somerville,
Massachusetts
96.32

45

Matakauri Lodge
Queenstown,
New Zealand 96.27

46

**Frangipani Beach
Resort**
Anguilla 96.25

47

**Anantara Hua Hin
Resort**
Hua Hin,
Thailand 96.24

48

**Four Seasons
Safari Lodge
Serengeti**
Serengeti National
Park, Tanzania
96.22

49

Oberoi Udaivilas
Udaipur,
India 96.20

50

**andBeyond
Bateleur Camp**
Masai Mara
National Reserve,
Kenya 96.19

51

Palazzo Avino
Ravello,
Italy 96.15

52

**Anantara Golden
Triangle Elephant
Camp & Resort**
Chiang Rai,
Thailand 96.13

53

Bristol Hotel
Bristol,
Virginia 96.09

54

Oberoi Amarvilas
Agra,
India 96.08 ★

55

Fogo Island Inn
Newfoundland
96.00

55

**La Réserve Paris
Hotel & Spa**
96.00

55

North Block Hotel
Yountville,
California 96.00

55

**Rosewood
Castiglione del
Bosco**
Montalcino,
Italy 96.00

55

Tierra Atacama
San Pedro de
Atacama,
Chile 96.00

55

**Viceroy Riviera
Maya**
Playa del Carmen,
Mexico 96.00

61

Curtain Bluff
Antigua 95.95

62

**Matetsi
Victoria Falls**
Matetsi Private
Game Reserve,
Zimbabwe 95.95

63

**Montage
Kapalua Bay**
Maui, Hawaii 95.88

64

**Four Seasons
Resort Bali at
Sayan**
Indonesia 95.83

65

**andBeyond
Kirkman's Kamp**
Sabi Sands
Game Reserve,
South Africa 95.81

66

Deer Path Inn
Lake Forest,
Illinois 95.80

66

The Lanesborough
London 95.80

68

**andBeyond Phinda
Forest Lodge**
Phinda Private
Game Reserve,
South Africa 95.79

69

**Sabi Sabi Private
Game Reserve
Lodges**
South Africa 95.78

70

Jade Mountain
St. Lucia 95.75 ★

71

Six Senses Samui
Koh Samui,
Thailand 95.75

72

**Rancho Valencia
Resort & Spa**
San Diego 95.74

73

Hotel Wailea
Maui,
Hawaii 95.74

74

Oberoi Rajvilas
Jaipur,
India 95.71 ★

75

**Meadowood
Napa Valley**
St. Helena,
California 95.67

76

Tensing Pen
Negril,
Jamaica 95.67

77

**InterContinental
Danang Sun
Peninsula Resort**
Vietnam 95.66

78

Katikies Hotel
Santorini,
Greece 95.63

79

Triple Creek Ranch
Darby,
Montana 95.62 ★



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▲ NO. 1 HOTEL BRAND

Six Senses now has properties in 14 countries, including Oman, where it operates the resort Zighy Bay on the Musandam Peninsula.

80 Hacienda AltaGracia, Auberge Resorts Collection
Pérez Zeledón, Costa Rica 95.62

81 Hotel Bristol, a Luxury Collection Hotel
Warsaw 95.60

81 St. Regis Bora Bora Resort
French Polynesia 95.60

83 Palacio del Inka, a Luxury Collection Hotel
Cuzco, Peru 95.59

84 Post Ranch Inn
Big Sur, California 95.53

85 Nayara Gardens
Arenal Volcano National Park, Costa Rica 95.51

86 Ngorongoro Serena Safari Lodge
Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania 95.50

87 Jumeirah at Etihad Towers
Abu Dhabi 95.47

88 Park Hyatt Saigon
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam 95.46

89 Le Meurice
Paris 95.44

90 Lebua at State Tower
Bangkok 95.43

91 Belmond La Résidence Phou Vao
Luang Prabang, Laos 95.37

92 Casa Chameleon at Las Catalinas
Guanacaste, Costa Rica 95.36

93 Milestone Hotel
London 95.33

94 Round Hill Hotel & Villas
Montego Bay, Jamaica 95.32

95 Montage Los Cabos
Cabo San Lucas, Mexico 95.32

96 Temple House
Chengdu, China 95.32

97 Vidanta
Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico 95.30

98 The Lowell
New York City 95.29

98 Spectator Hotel
Charleston, South Carolina 95.29

100 Borgo Egnazia
Savelletri di Fasano, Italy 95.29

TOP 25 HOTEL BRANDS

1 Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas
98.56

With travelers today more focused than ever on wellness and responsible tourism, readers appreciate the pioneering initiatives of this brand—now part of the InterContinental Hotels Group—in both spheres.

2 Oberoi Hotels & Resorts
95.24

3 Inkaterra Hotels
94.84

4 Tivoli Hotels & Resorts
94.75

5 Montage Hotels & Resorts
94.60

6 Red Carnation Hotel Collection
94.11

7 Anantara Hotels, Resorts & Spas
93.74

8 Sofitel Legend
93.60

9 Raffles Hotels & Resorts
93.47

10 The Leela Palaces, Hotels & Resorts
93.41

11 COMO Hotels & Resorts
93.33

12 The Peninsula Hotels
93.32

13 Auberge Resorts Collection
93.30

14 One&Only Resorts
93.06

15 Aman
92.75

16 Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts
91.47

17 Firmdale Hotels
91.33

18 Rosewood Hotels & Resorts
91.16

19 Hyatt Ziva
91.08

20 Mandarin Oriental
90.80

21 Belmond
90.69

22 Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts
90.65

23 Rocco Forte Hotels
90.61

24 The Luxury Collection
90.33

25 St. Regis Hotels & Resorts
90.03

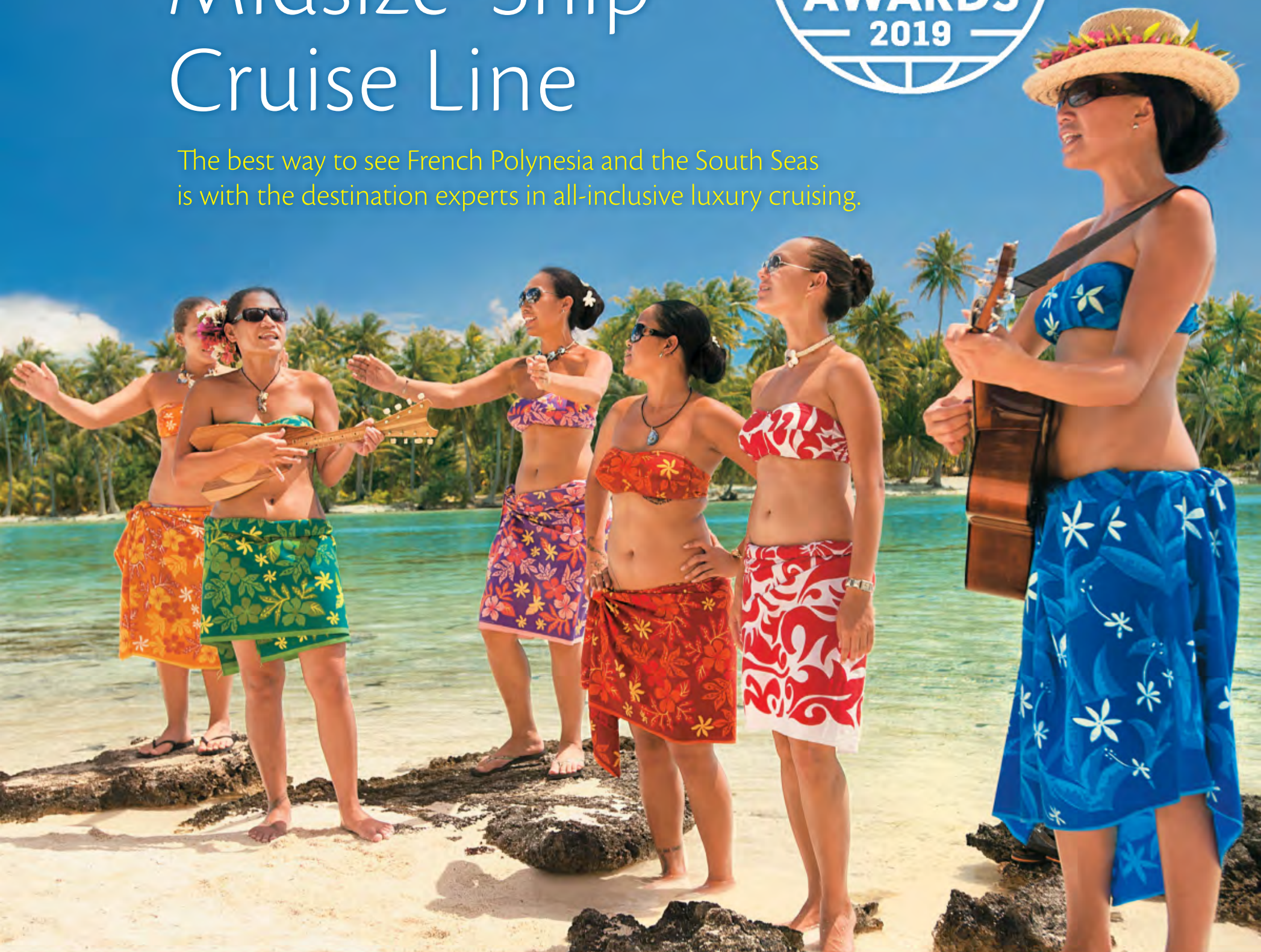
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Paul Gauguin
CRUISES



NO. 1 CITY HOTEL IN THE U.S.

Guest-room décor at the Inn of the Five Graces channels the spirit of Santa Fe.

2 Inn at Willow Grove
Orange,
Virginia 97.22

3 Rabbit Hill Inn
Lower Waterford,
Vermont 96.89

4 North Block Hotel
Yountville,
California 96.00

5 Deer Path Inn
Lake Forest,
Illinois 95.80

**6 Rancho Valencia
Resort & Spa**
San Diego 95.74

**7 Meadowood
Napa Valley**
St. Helena,
California 95.67

8 Triple Creek Ranch
Darby,
Montana 95.62 ★

9 Post Ranch Inn
Big Sur,
California 95.53

10 The Setai
Miami Beach 95.16

11 Inns of Aurora
Aurora, New York
94.96

**12 Mountain Sky
Guest Ranch**
Emigrant,
Montana 94.40

**13 Gasparilla
Inn & Club**
Boca Grande,
Florida 94.33

14 Tu Tu' Tun Lodge
Gold Beach,
Oregon 94.18

**15 Vintage House
at the Estate**
Yountville,
California 94.16

U.S. Hotels

Though sleek properties in major hubs are well represented this year, smaller hotels in proudly quirky destinations like Austin, Chattanooga, and Santa Fe also earned high marks.

TOP 15 CONTINENTAL U.S. CITY HOTELS

**1 Inn of the
Five Graces**
Santa Fe,
New Mexico 96.62

Quintessentially Santa Fe in its aesthetic (adobe buildings, kiva fireplaces) and atmosphere of relaxed elegance, this first-time winner puts guests steps from the city's best cultural offerings.

2 Hotel Eleven
Austin,
Texas 96.55

**3 Row Hotel at
Assembly Row**
Somerville,
Massachusetts
96.32

4 Bristol Hotel
Bristol,
Virginia 96.09

5 The Lowell
New York City 95.29

5 Spectator Hotel
Charleston,
South Carolina
95.29

7 Viceroy
Chicago 94.86

8 Whitby Hotel
New York City 94.75

9 The Chatwal
New York City 94.58

10 The Edwin
Chattanooga,
Tennessee 94.46

11 The Mark
New York City 94.40

12 Hotel Zachary
Chicago 94.13

13 Hotel Emma
San Antonio,
Texas 93.96

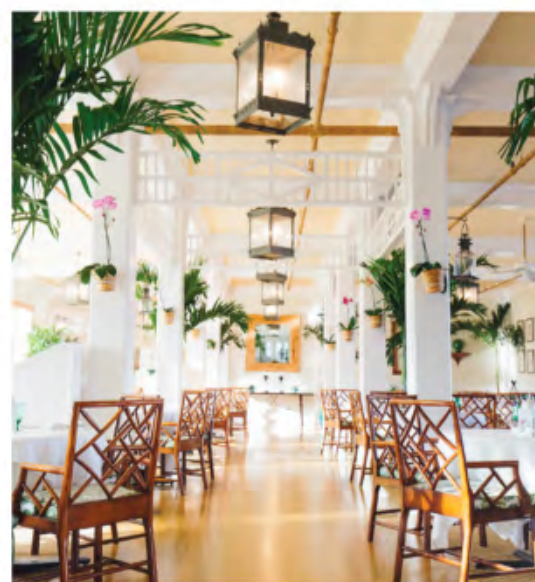
14 The Peninsula
Beverly Hills,
California 93.89 ★

15 The Langham
Chicago 93.87

TOP 15 CONTINENTAL U.S. RESORT HOTELS

**1 Lodge & Spa at
Brush Creek Ranch**
Saratoga, Wyoming
98.67

Stretching across more than 30,000 acres, this working cattle ranch in the North Platte River Valley entices with horseback riding, fly-fishing, and other outdoor pursuits.



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▲ NO. 1 HOTEL IN NEW YORK CITY

The Lowell's contemporary art collection enhances its traditional architecture.

TOP 10 NEW YORK CITY HOTELS

- 1 The Lowell**
95.29

In its second year atop the category, the stylish Upper East Side property impresses with its glossy interiors, residential feel, and divine afternoon tea.
- 2 Whitby Hotel**
94.75
- 3 The Chatwal**
94.58
- 4 The Mark**
94.40
- 5 High Line Hotel**
93.50
- 6 Hotel 50 Bowery, a Joie de Vivre Hotel**
92.40
- 7 Lotte New York Palace**
91.93
- 8 Greenwich Hotel**
91.62
- 9 The Surrey**
91.33
- 10 Archer**
90.84

TOP 5 WASHINGTON, D.C. HOTELS

- 1 The Jefferson**
92.38

Suffused with nods to the eponymous founding father's life and accomplishments, the hotel acts as an elegant home away from home for movers and shakers from around the world.
- 2 Willard InterContinental**
91.09
- 3 The Hay-Adams**
89.32
- 4 St. Regis**
88.88
- 5 Melrose Georgetown Hotel**
88.00

TOP 5 CHICAGO HOTELS

- 1 Viceroy Chicago**
94.86

Contemporary design and an ideal location in the coveted Gold Coast neighborhood—close to some of the city's best restaurants—are a winning combination.
- 2 Hotel Zachary**
94.13
- 3 The Langham**
93.87
- 4 The Peninsula**
93.35 ★
- 5 Hotel Julian**
93.33

TOP 5 GREATER LOS ANGELES HOTELS

- 1 The Peninsula**
Beverly Hills
93.89 ★

With over-the-top amenities like a fleet of BMWs and a Mini Cooper for exploring the city, this tony property goes out of its way to make guests feel like stars.

- 2 London West Hollywood at Beverly Hills**
93.49
- 3 Petit Ermitage**
West Hollywood
92.57
- 4 Waldorf Astoria**
Beverly Hills 91.61
- 5 Hotel Figueroa**
Los Angeles 90.77

TOP 5 CHARLESTON HOTELS

- 1 Spectator Hotel**
95.29

The polished 41-room property—located a mere block from City Market—draws raves for its intimate cocktail bar, gracious butler

service, and splendid in-room breakfasts.

- 2 Wentworth Mansion**
93.26
- 3 Zero George Street Hotel**
93.16
- 4 The Vendue**
93.15
- 5 John Rutledge House Inn**
93.13

TOP 5 GREATER MIAMI BEACH RESORT HOTELS

- 1 The Setai**
Miami Beach 95.16

Housed in one of South Beach's tallest towers, this Asian-inspired favorite has earned a following for its trio of pools, exquisite guest rooms, and indulgent spa, which offers the brand's signature Balinese massage.

FROM TOP: ELLIE PINNEY PHOTOGRAPHY/COURTESY OF THE LOWELL; MATT RICE



- 2 **The Betsy**
South Beach 94.10
- 3 **Acqualina Resort & Spa, Miami**
Sunny Isles Beach 91.49
- 4 **St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort**
91.47
- 5 **Miami Beach Edition**
90.33

TOP 10
FLORIDA
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 **Gasparilla Inn & Club**
Boca Grande 94.33

Decorated in delicate pastel hues and Old Florida-style fabrics, this beloved property feels like a welcoming country club.
- 2 **Little Palm Island Resort & Spa**
Little Torch Key 93.45
- 3 **Havana Cabana Hotel**
Key West 93.08
- 4 **Four Seasons Resort Orlando at Walt Disney World Resort**
92.87
- 5 **Pearl Hotel**
Rosemary Beach 92.50
- 6 **Marker Waterfront Resort**
Key West 92.47

- 7 **Perry Hotel**
Key West 91.77
- 8 **Sandpearl Resort**
Clearwater Beach 91.72
- 9 **Ocean Key Resort & Spa**
Key West 91.61
- 10 **Kimpton Vero Beach Hotel & Spa**
91.43

TOP 10
CALIFORNIA
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 **North Block Hotel**
Yountville 96.00

With just 20 rooms, this petite refuge is a convenient and tranquil option for oenophiles looking to explore Napa Valley’s wineries and restaurants.
- 2 **Rancho Valencia Resort & Spa**
San Diego 95.74
- 3 **Meadowood Napa Valley**
St. Helena 95.67
- 4 **Post Ranch Inn**
Big Sur 95.53
- 5 **Vintage House at the Estate**
Yountville 94.16
- 6 **Ranch at Laguna Beach**
93.76
- 7 **Solage, Auberge Resorts Collection**
Calistoga 93.60

- 8 **Resort at Pelican Hill**
Newport Beach 93.59
- 9 **Rosewood Sand Hill**
Menlo Park 92.94
- 10 **Holiday House**
Palm Springs 92.89

TOP 10
NORTHEAST
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 **Rabbit Hill Inn**
Lower Waterford, Vermont 96.89

Picturesque backdrops and gracious hosts distinguish this Vermont escape, positioned on the edge of the Green Mountain State’s Northeast Kingdom—prime leaf-peeping territory.
- 2 **Inns of Aurora**
Aurora, New York 94.96
- 3 **Weekapaug Inn**
Westerly, Rhode Island 93.53
- 4 **White Elephant**
Nantucket, Massachusetts 93.10
- 5 **Twin Farms**
Barnard, Vermont 92.89
- 6 **Ocean House**
Watch Hill, Rhode Island 92.84
- 7 **Nantucket Hotel & Resort**
Massachusetts 92.10

◀
NO. 1 RESORT HOTEL IN FLORIDA

The Gasparilla Inn & Club occupies a grand manor house built in 1913.

- 8 **Wequassett Resort & Golf Club**
Harwich, Massachusetts 91.45
- 9 **Winvian Farm**
Morris, Connecticut 91.26
- 10 **Lake Placid Lodge**
Lake Placid, New York 91.08

TOP 10
SOUTH
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 **Inn at Willow Grove**
Orange, Virginia 97.22

Nestled in Virginia’s wine country, this colonial mansion invites travelers to unplug with a variety of activities, including hikes through the Blue Ridge foothills, hot-air ballooning, and vineyard tours.
- 2 **Lodge at Sea Island**
St. Simons Island, Georgia 93.83
- 3 **Swag Resort**
Waynesville, North Carolina 93.75
- 4 **Blackberry Farm**
Walland, Tennessee 93.58
- 5 **Primland**
Meadows of Dan, Virginia 92.76
- 6 **Montage Palmetto Bluff**
Bluffton, South Carolina 92.70
- 7 **Fearrington House Inn**
Pittsboro, North Carolina 92.29
- 8 **Cloister at Sea Island**
Georgia 92.13
- 9 **Inn at Little Washington**
Washington, Virginia 91.91

- 10 **Old Edwards Inn & Spa**
Highlands, North Carolina 91.84

TOP 5
MIDWEST
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 **Deer Path Inn**
Lake Forest, Illinois 95.80

This suburban estate outside Chicago brings a traditional English innkeeping philosophy to the North Shore—complete with afternoon tea and a lively pub.
- 2 **Grand Hotel**
Mackinac Island, Michigan 91.15
- 3 **Big Cedar Lodge**
Ridgedale, Missouri 90.29
- 4 **American Club at Destination Kohler**
Kohler, Wisconsin 90.28
- 5 **Hotel Iroquois**
Mackinac Island, Michigan 87.78

TOP 10
WEST
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 **Lodge & Spa at Brush Creek Ranch**
Saratoga, Wyoming 98.67

With its upscale log-cabin residences and traditional ranch activities, this expansive property—flanked by the Sierra Madre mountains and Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest—showcases the best of the American West.



**NO. 1 RESORT
HOTEL IN
HAWAII**

It's easy to see why visits to Montage Kapalua Bay, in Maui, include plenty of pool time.

2 Triple Creek Ranch
Darby,
Montana 95.62 ★

**3 Mountain Sky
Guest Ranch**
Emigrant,
Montana 94.40

4 Tu Tu' Tun Lodge
Gold Beach,
Oregon 94.18

**5 Lodge at Edgewood
Tahoe**
Lake Tahoe,
Nevada 93.89

6 Sonnenalp Hotel
Vail,
Colorado 93.69

7 The Broadmoor
Colorado Springs
93.54

**8 Cloud Camp at the
Broadmoor**
Colorado Springs
93.51

**9 Hotel Jerome,
Auberge Resorts
Collection**
Aspen,
Colorado 93.17

10 Amangiri
Canyon Point,
Utah 93.11

TOP 15
HAWAII
RESORT HOTELS

**1 Montage
Kapalua Bay**
Maui 95.88

An abundance of spacious suites—all refreshed last year—makes this luxe Maui property a big hit with multi-generational families.

2 Hotel Wailea
Maui 95.74

**3 Four Seasons
Resort Hualalai**
Big Island 94.55 ★

**4 Four Seasons
Resort**
Lanai 92.89 ★

**5 Ko'a Kea
Hotel & Resort**
Kauai 92.30

**6 Trump
International
Hotel Waikiki**
Oahu 91.65

7 Travaasa Hana
Maui 91.23

**8 Four Seasons
Resort Maui
at Wailea**
90.75

**9 Four Seasons
Resort Oahu
at Ko Olina**
90.71

**10 Westin Hapuna
Beach Resort**
Big Island 89.57

11 Halekulani
Oahu 89.46 ★

**12 Andaz Maui Wailea
Resort**
89.06

**13 Mauna Lani,
Auberge Resorts
Collection**
Big Island 88.73

**14 Fairmont Orchid,
Hawaii**
Big Island 88.17

**15 Wailea Beach
Resort-Marriott**
Maui 87.90

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**NO. 1 RESORT
HOTEL IN CANADA**

Fogo Island Inn's minimalist aesthetic highlights the granite terrain on which it sits.



Canada Hotels

Standouts in the country showcase stunning natural settings, whether it's a world-class lakeside lodge—such as the Post Hotel & Spa—or a spacious retreat on the forested Pacific Coast, as with the Wickaninnish Inn.

TOP 5 CANADA RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Fogo Island Inn**
Newfoundland
96.00

A remote location in the North Atlantic and a geometric exterior belie the hominess of this 29-room boutique property, which three-peats this year as category winner.
- 2 Post Hotel & Spa**
Lake Louise,
Alberta 92.83

- 3 Fairmont Chateau Whistler**
British Columbia
91.60
- 4 Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise**
Alberta 91.57
- 5 Wickaninnish Inn**
Tofino,
British Columbia
90.33 ★

world's first Ritz-Carltons—elegant touches like crystal chandeliers and marble fireplaces are rivaled only by the warm service.

TOP 6 CANADA CITY HOTELS

- 1 The Ritz-Carlton**
Montreal 92.50

At this iconic hotel on the city's Golden Square Mile—one of the

- 2 Loden Hotel**
Vancouver 91.68
- 3 Rosewood Hotel Georgia**
Vancouver 90.74
- 4 The Ritz-Carlton**
Toronto 90.55
- 5 Auberge Saint-Antoine**
Quebec City 90.00
- 5 Fairmont Pacific Rim**
Vancouver 90.00

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Caribbean, Bermuda, and the Bahamas Hotels

The exquisite properties on this year's list prove there's something for everyone in this region, from couples seeking a romantic escape to families in need of a getaway.

TOP 25 CARIBBEAN, BERMUDA, AND THE BAHAMAS RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Shore Club**
Turks and Caicos 96.79

The only major development on Long Bay Beach, this waterfront oasis offers exceptional privacy, whether guests

stay in the villas or the beautifully appointed suites.

- 2 Frangipani Beach Resort**
Anguilla 96.25
- 3 Curtain Bluff**
Antigua 95.95
- 4 Jade Mountain**
St. Lucia 95.75 ★
- 5 Tensing Pen**
Negril, Jamaica 95.67
- 6 Round Hill Hotel & Villas**
Montego Bay, Jamaica 95.32
- 7 Le Sereno**
St. Bart's 95.00
- 8 Secret Bay**
Dominica 94.60
- 9 Cap Maison**
St. Lucia 94.55
- 10 Jamaica Inn**
Ocho Rios, Jamaica 94.53
- 11 COMO Parrot Cay**
Turks and Caicos 94.51
- 12 Kamalame Cay**
Bahamas 94.34
- 13 The Palms**
Turks and Caicos 94.30
- 14 Malliouhana, Auberge Resorts Collection**
Anguilla 94.09
- 15 Anse Chastanet**
St. Lucia 94.00
- 16 Rockhouse Hotel**
Negril, Jamaica 93.93
- 17 Park Hyatt St. Kitts Christophe Harbour**
93.75
- 18 Sugar Beach, a Viceroy Resort**
St. Lucia 93.74
- 19 Couples Tower Isle**
Ocho Rios, Jamaica 93.73
- 20 Nisbet Plantation Beach Club**
Nevis 93.33
- 21 Necker Island**
British Virgin Islands 93.07
- 22 Couples Sans Souci**
Ocho Rios, Jamaica 92.67
- 23 Serafina Beach Hotel**
San Juan, Puerto Rico 92.21
- 24 Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa**
Anguilla 91.85
- 25 Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve**
Puerto Rico 91.28

NO. 1 RESORT HOTEL IN THE CARIBBEAN, BERMUDA, AND THE BAHAMAS

The Shore Club Turks and Caicos sits on Long Bay Beach, a haven for windsurfers.

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Mexico and Central and South America Hotels

Whether situated in a city or along the coast, the accommodations that captivated readers draw on rich local heritage to create experiences that connect them to both the land and the people.

TOP 15 MEXICO RESORT HOTELS

1 Resort at Pedregal
Cabo San Lucas
97.51

Cabo San Lucas is as popular as ever—and so is this cliffside haven, where every room has an ocean view.

2 Rosewood Mayakoba
Playa del Carmen
96.89

3 Las Ventanas al Paraíso, a Rosewood Resort
San José del Cabo
96.56

4 Viceroy Riviera Maya
Playa del Carmen
96.00

5 Montage Los Cabos
Cabo San Lucas
95.32

6 Vidanta
Nuevo Vallarta
95.30

7 Unico 20°87° Hotel
Riviera Maya 94.56

8 Chileno Bay Resort, Auberge Resorts Collection
Cabo San Lucas
94.45

9 Esperanza, Auberge Resorts Collection
Cabo San Lucas
93.99

10 Mahekal Beach Resort
Playa del Carmen
93.82

11 Hyatt Ziva
Cancún 93.69

12 St. Regis Punta Mita Resort
93.56

13 Pueblo Bonito Emerald Bay Resort & Spa
Mazatlán 93.28

14 One&Only Palmilla
San José del Cabo
93.26

15 Cala de Mar Resort & Spa
Ixtapa 92.46

TOP 5 MEXICO CITY HOTELS

1 Hotel Matilda
San Miguel de Allende 97.54

This contemporary boutique option forgoes the hacienda style most associate with San Miguel, but it has all the

qualities travelers love about the city—thoughtful design, world-class art, and killer food.

2 St. Regis
Mexico City 92.50

3 Las Alcobas
Mexico City 91.09

4 Belmond Casa de Sierra Nevada
San Miguel de Allende 90.73

5 Rosewood
San Miguel de Allende 90.50

TOP 10 CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA CITY HOTELS

1 Palacio del Inka, a Luxury Collection Hotel
Cuzco, Peru 95.59

From its ideal location—steps from the Temple of the Sun in the center of town—to its magnificent furnishings, this 500-year-old mansion checks every box for travelers visiting Cuzco.

2 Hotel Casa San Agustín
Cartagena,
Colombia 95.03

3 Sofitel Legend Santa Clara
Cartagena,
Colombia 93.82

4 Belmond Palacio Nazarenas
Cuzco, Peru 93.76

5 Casa Gangotena
Quito, Ecuador
92.63

6 The Ritz-Carlton
Santiago,
Chile 92.00

7 Four Seasons Hotel
Bogotá,
Colombia 91.53

8 Belmond Hotel Monasterio
Cuzco, Peru 90.82 ★

9 Hotel B
Lima, Peru 90.80

10 Belmond Copacabana Palace
Rio de Janeiro 90.78

TOP 10 SOUTH AMERICA RESORT HOTELS

1 Tierra Patagonia
Torres del Paine,
Chile 97.65

The Modernist design of this lodge integrates local materials and regional art at every opportunity; the natural setting is dazzling, too.

2 Vines Resort & Spa
Mendoza,
Argentina 97.20

3 Sol y Luna
Sacred Valley,
Peru 96.40

4 Tierra Atacama
San Pedro de Atacama,
Chile 96.00

5 Cavas Wine Lodge
Mendoza,
Argentina 95.26

6 Tambo del Inka, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa
Sacred Valley,
Peru 94.06

7 Awasi Atacama
San Pedro de Atacama,
Chile 94.00

8 Singular Patagonia
Puerto Bories,
Chile 93.85

9 Inkaterra Hacienda Urubamba
Sacred Valley, Peru
93.50

10 Explora Patagonia
Torres del Paine
National Park, Chile
93.20

TOP 5 CENTRAL AMERICA RESORT HOTELS

1 Lapa Rios Lodge
Osa Peninsula,
Costa Rica 97.87

Sustainability is more than a buzzword at this rain-forest sanctum, which offers tours of the more-than-1,000-acre reserve it helps protect.

2 Hacienda AltaGracia, Auberge Resorts Collection
Pérez Zeledón,
Costa Rica 95.62

3 Nayara Gardens
Arenal Volcano
National Park,
Costa Rica 95.51

4 Casa Chameleon at Las Catalinas
Guanacaste,
Costa Rica 95.36

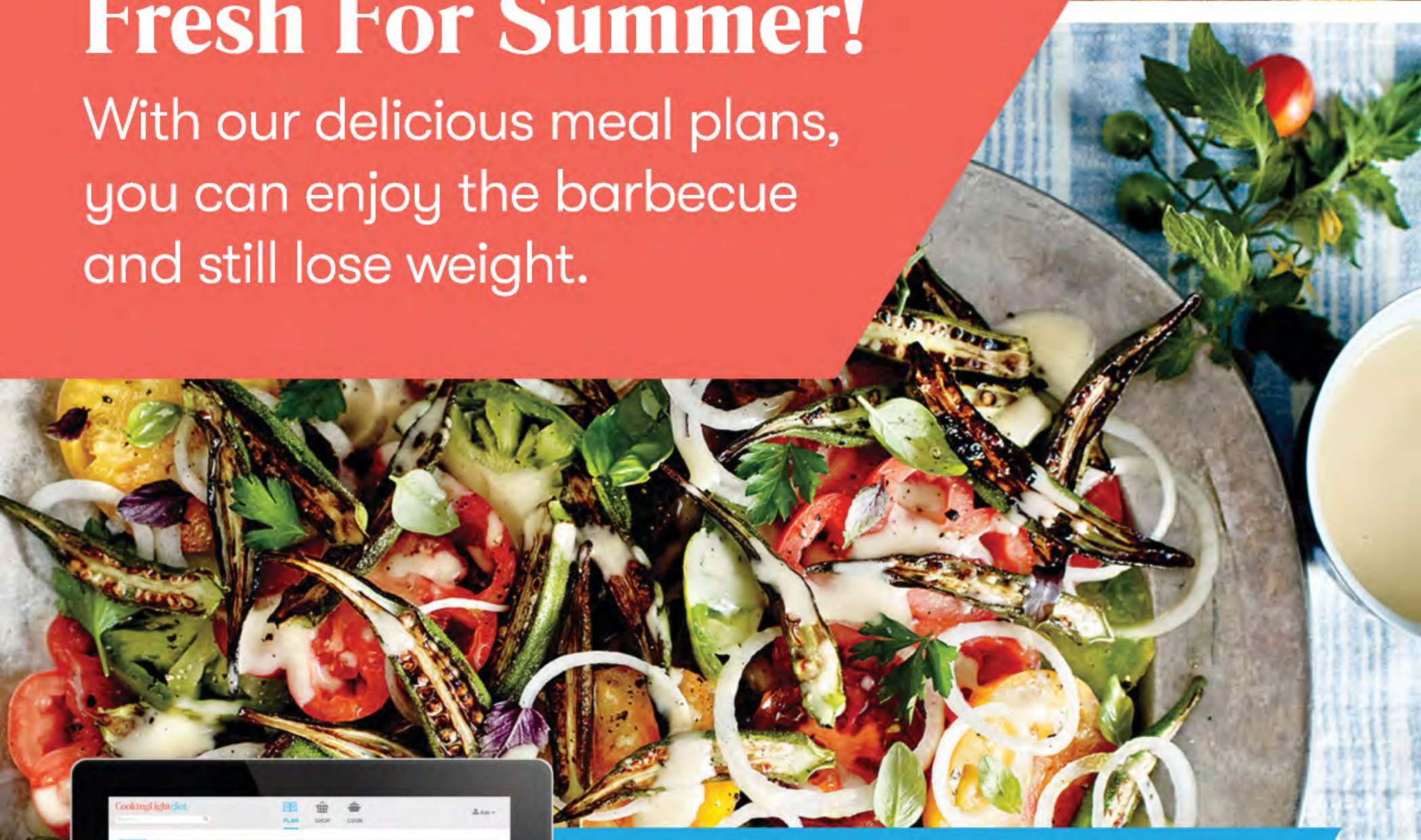
5 Nayara Springs
Arenal Volcano
National Park,
Costa Rica 94.32



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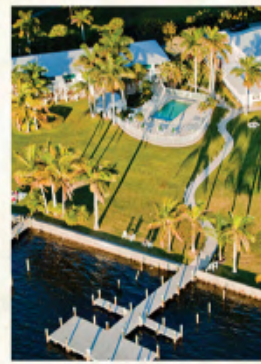
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►
**NO. 1 RESORT
HOTEL IN
EUROPE**

*An infinity pool
at Canaves Oia
Epitome seems to
melt into the sea.*

Europe Hotels

Intimate properties in classic destinations—the Cyclades, the Côte d'Azur, the Amalfi Coast—won big this year as countries like Greece, France, and Italy continued to prevail.

TOP 10
EUROPE
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Canaves Oia Epitome**
Santorini, Greece 97.58

This year-old stunner gives guests a surprising amount of privacy considering the location, making it especially well-suited for honeymooners.
- 2 Grace Hotel Santorini, Auberge Resorts Collection**
Greece 96.40
- 3 Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni**
Bellagio, Italy 96.33

- 4 Palazzo Avino**
Ravello, Italy 96.15

- 5 Rosewood Castiglion del Bosco**
Montalcino, Italy 96.00

- 6 Katikies Hotel**
Santorini, Greece 95.63

- 7 Borgo Egnazia**
Savelletri di Fasano, Italy 95.29

- 8 Ballyfin**
County Laois, Ireland 95.16

- 8 Andronis Luxury Suites**
Santorini, Greece 95.16

- 10 Andronis Boutique Hotel**
Santorini, Greece 94.76

TOP 10
EUROPE
CITY HOTELS

- 1 J.K. Place Firenze**
Florence 97.27

The history and romance of the continent come alive in this aristocratic 20-room town house, which sits steps from the iconic Piazza di Santa Maria Novella.

- 2 La Réserve Paris Hotel & Spa**
Paris 96.00

- 3 The Lanesborough**
London 95.80

- 4 Hotel Bristol, a Luxury Collection Hotel**
Warsaw 95.60

- 5 Le Meurice**
Paris 95.44

- 6 Milestone Hotel**
London 95.33

- 7 The Peninsula**
Paris 94.74

- 8 Waldorf Astoria**
Amsterdam 94.57

- 9 41**
London 94.46

- 10 Ham Yard Hotel**
London 94.24

COURTESY OF CANAVES OIA EPITOME





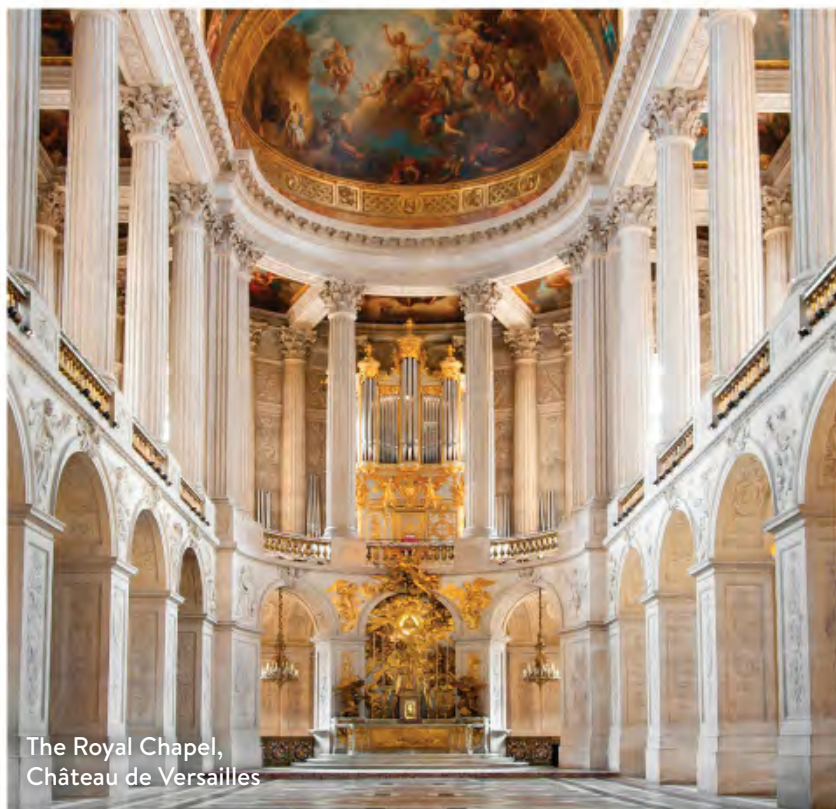
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EXPLORE EUROPE WITH HILTON

Situated steps from palaces, grand squares, and royal parklands, **Hilton** offers room keys (including digital ones) to some of Europe's best neighborhoods.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

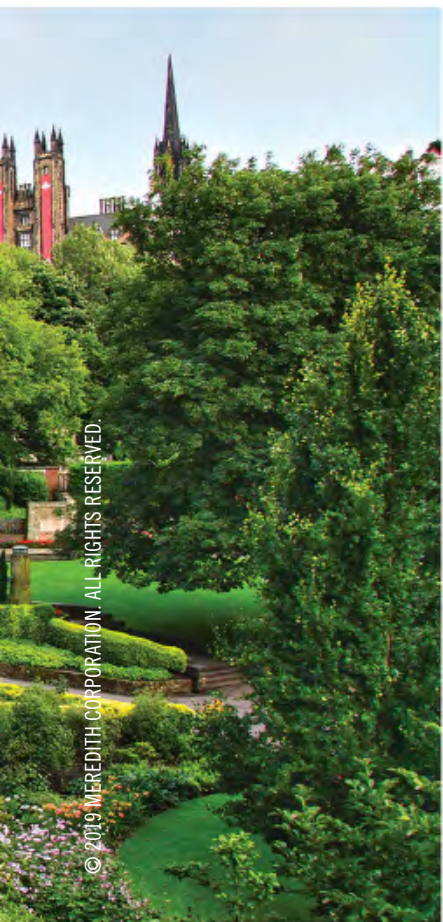
Now accepting reservations, **The Biltmore, Mayfair, LXR Hotels & Resorts** has redefined luxury in one of London's poshest neighborhoods. With the feeling of an elegant private estate and a prime location overlooking Grosvenor Square, The Biltmore is a gateway to tailored experiences—from visiting bespoke shops on Savile Row to sipping cocktails on the hotel's outdoor terrace. Explore nearby royal parks including Green Park and Hyde Park, and walk to famous sights such as Buckingham Palace and Trafalgar Square.



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Waldorf Astoria Amsterdam

**EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND**

Whether you're visiting Scotland on its own or hopping around the U.K., **Waldorf Astoria Edinburgh – The Caledonian** is an ideal home base. First built in 1903, this grand hotel has the largest number of rooms with views of Edinburgh Castle in the city and is within walking distance of the Royal Mile and the Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. For a taste of fine dining, reserve a table at the iconic Pompadour restaurant, or sample modern and traditional sharing plates at Grazing by Mark Greenaway.

AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

Connected by a maze of 165 canals and more than 1,000 bridges, Amsterdam is a great city for exploring on foot or bicycle, as many locals do. Within the prestigious Herengracht neighborhood—one of the city's most exclusive places to live—the canal-front **Waldorf Astoria Amsterdam** is comprised of six 17th-century

canal palaces. Stay in the hotel's lofted top-floor rooms showcasing authentic wooden beams, or indulge in a lavish suite.

VERSAILLES, FRANCE

Get a taste of the French countryside with one of the most iconic palaces in the world as your neighbor. Situated on the edge of the manicured lawn of the legendary Château de Versailles, **Waldorf Astoria Versailles – Trianon Palace** is walking distance from the royal grounds and about a half-hour from Paris by car. Tour the palace, tee off on one of the area's golf courses, or unwind with a treatment at the hotel's elegant Spa Guerlain.

BERLIN, GERMANY

While Berlin's edgy east side has hip galleries, arty shops, and street art, the City West district offers a more elevated urban oasis in which to appreciate the German capital. At the **Waldorf Astoria Berlin**, luxuriate in the gracious Art Deco ambience and settle into a plush aerie, including the highest suites in the city. Down below, visit museums and opera houses, hit the high-end shops on Kurfürstendamm (or Ku'Damm, as locals call it), and recharge with coffee and cake at a stylish café.

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TOP 10
LONDON
HOTELS

- 1 The Lanesborough**
95.80
On prime real estate near Hyde Park Corner, this posh hotel is a case study in British grandeur.
- 2 Milestone Hotel**
95.33
- 3 41**
94.46
- 4 Ham Yard Hotel**
94.24
- 5 Chesterfield Mayfair**
93.65
- 6 Corinthia**
92.58
- 7 The Ritz**
92.36
- 8 The Goring**
92.21
- 9 Rubens at the Palace**
91.68
- 10 The Connaught**
90.97

TOP 5
U.K. AND IRELAND
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Ballyfin**
County Laois, Ireland 95.16
Dignified Irish manors in bucolic settings dominated the category, and this storied retreat rose above its peers, thanks to its proximity to Dublin, lavish art, and outdoor activities.
- 2 Gleneagles**
Perthshire, Scotland 94.00
- 3 Ashford Castle**
County Mayo, Ireland 92.98
- 4 Adare Manor**
County Limerick, Ireland 92.20
- 5 Sheen Falls Lodge**
County Kerry, Ireland 92.00

TOP 10
PARIS
HOTELS

- 1 La Réserve Paris Hotel & Spa**
96.00
In a city that does spectacular so well, this exclusive sanctuary in the Eighth Arrondissement is like no other, with its velvet and silk décor, intuitive butlers, and Michelin-starred dining.
- 2 Le Meurice**
95.44
- 3 The Peninsula**
94.74
- 4 Hôtel Esprit Saint Germain**
93.23
- 5 Hôtel de Crillon, a Rosewood Hotel**
93.22
- 6 Mandarin Oriental**
93.22
- 7 Hôtel Plaza Athénée**
93.13

- 8 Ritz Paris**
92.61
- 9 Shangri-La Hotel**
92.38
- 10 Prince de Galles, a Luxury Collection Hotel**
92.00

TOP 5
FRANCE
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 La Chèvre d'Or**
Èze 93.18
The toughest task here is choosing a view: the glimmering Mediterranean Sea or the hills of the Côte d'Azur—both of which dazzle from the guest rooms and the landscaped terraces.
- 2 Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc**
Cap d'Antibes 91.79
- 3 Domaine Les Crayères**
Reims 89.65

- 4 Grand-Hôtel du Cap-Ferrat, a Four Seasons Hotel**
St.-Jean-Cap-Ferrat 89.56
- 5 Château Eza**
Èze 89.42

TOP 5
FLORENCE
HOTELS

- 1 J.K. Place Firenze**
97.27
Every room within this hotel feels as grand and romantic as the city it inhabits, from standard quarters with four-poster beds to the penthouse suite with a bathtub overlooking the Duomo.
- 2 St. Regis**
93.49
- 3 Hotel Brunelleschi**
93.20
- 4 Hotel Lungarno**
93.06
- 5 Portrait Firenze**
92.38



◀

**NO. 1 RESORT
HOTEL IN THE
U.K. AND
IRELAND**

Antiques and period furnishings set the stage for elegant meals at Ballyfin.

►
**NO. 1 HOTEL
IN VENICE**

The Gritti Palace's Patron of the Arts Suite looks onto the Grand Canal.

TOP 5
VENICE
HOTELS

- 1 Gritti Palace, a Luxury Collection Hotel**
92.12

Favored by discerning guests for decades—there are suites named after Ernest Hemingway and Peggy Guggenheim—this palazzo on the Grand Canal immerses travelers in Italian finery.

- 2 Ca' Sagredo Hotel**
91.79
- 3 JW Marriott Venice Resort & Spa**
91.24
- 4 Hotel Londra Palace**
90.40
- 5 Belmond Hotel Cipriani**
89.18

TOP 5
ROME
HOTELS

- 1 J.K. Place Roma**
91.86

While the hotel's elegant interiors honor its building's history—it was a school of architecture—the anticipatory service from every staff member is what earns repeat visits.

- 2 Hotel Hassler**
91.00
- 3 Hotel de Russie, a Rocco Forte Hotel**
90.38

- 4 St. Regis**
89.92

- 5 Hotel Eden**
89.11

TOP 5
ITALY
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni**
Bellagio 96.33

Murano-glass chandeliers, marble staircases, and Persian carpets complement the Neoclassical bones of this stately lakefront palazzo, which became a hotel in 1873.

- 2 Palazzo Avino**
Ravello 96.15
- 3 Rosewood Castiglion del Bosco**
Montalcino 96.00

- 4 Borgo Egnazia**
Savelletri di Fasano 95.29

- 5 Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria**
Sorrento 94.36

TOP 5
GREECE
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Canaves Oia Epitome**
Santorini 97.58

This haven tempers the island's iconic look—white-washed walls and

blue accents—with rocky, rough-hewn details reminiscent of the island's volcanic origins.

- 2 Grace Hotel Santorini, Auberge Resorts Collection**
96.40

- 3 Katikies Hotel**
Santorini 95.63

- 4 Andronis Luxury Suites**
Santorini 95.16

- 5 Andronis Boutique Hotel**
Santorini 94.76

TOP 5
BARCELONA
HOTELS

- 1 Mandarin Oriental**
91.83

An enviable location on the Passeig de Gràcia gives travelers rooftop views of Gaudí's Casa Batlló and easy access to the abundant high-end shopping in the L'Eixample neighborhood.

- 2 Majestic Hotel & Spa**
87.47

- 3 Hotel Arts**
87.32

- 4 Hotel 1898**
87.25

- 5 W Barcelona**
86.18

TOP 3
**SPAIN AND
PORTUGAL**
RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Tivoli Palácio de Seteais**
Sintra, Portugal 94.61

Set in an 18th-century former palace, this ornate property is enhanced by period-appropriate tapestries and frescoes.

- 2 Six Senses Douro Valley**
Lamego, Portugal 92.11

- 3 Convento do Espinheiro, Historic Hotel & Spa**
Évora, Portugal 91.60



Asia Hotels

When deciding where to stay in some of Asia's biggest and busiest cities, T+L readers put a premium on prime locations and sumptuous décor, favoring top-tier international brands, such as Rosewood, Six Senses, and Oberoi.

TOP 10 ASIA CITY HOTELS

- 1 Rosewood**
Beijing 97.87

Situated across from the iconic CCTV building, this property offers a bevy of fine-dining options and proximity to marquee sights like the Ancient Observatory and Sun Park. It provides what visitors crave: a convenient place to unwind.

- 2 The Oberoi**
Mumbai 97.25
- 3 Leela Palace**
New Delhi 96.69

- 4 Park Hyatt Saigon**
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam 95.46
- 5 Lebua at State Tower**
Bangkok 95.43
- 6 Temple House**
Chengdu, China 95.32
- 7 The Peninsula**
Beijing 95.00
- 8 The Ritz-Carlton**
Tokyo 94.97
- 9 Taj Mahal Palace**
Mumbai 94.96
- 10 Leela Palace Bengaluru**
Bangalore, India 94.94

TOP 10 ASIA RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Leela Palace**
Udaipur, India 98.89

A tranquil setting on Lake Pichola and exceptional staff members who somehow divine guests' every whim imbue this resort with a regal atmosphere.

- 2 JW Marriott Phu Quoc Emerald Bay Resort & Spa**
Vietnam 98.56
- 3 The Mulia**
Bali, Indonesia 98.25
- 4 Six Senses**
Yao Noi, Thailand 97.74
- 5 Gangtey Lodge**
Phobjikha Valley, Bhutan 97.18
- 6 Six Senses Laamu**
Oluveli Island, Maldives 96.50
- 7 Taj Lake Palace**
Udaipur, India 96.48
- 8 Nihi Sumba**
Sumba Island, Indonesia 96.46

- 9 Anantara Hua Hin Resort**
Hua Hin, Thailand 96.24
- 10 Oberoi Udaivilas**
Udaipur, India 96.20

TOP 5 HONG KONG HOTELS

- 1 The Ritz-Carlton**
94.20

Some of the city's most exciting dining and art is concentrated in buzzy Kowloon, where this sophisticated hotel takes up 17 floors of a supertall tower.

- 2 The Peninsula**
93.83 ★
- 3 Mandarin Oriental**
93.75 ★
- 4 Upper House**
93.54
- 5 Four Seasons Hotel**
91.45

TOP 5 BEIJING HOTELS

- 1 Rosewood**
97.87

This gleaming property, the brand's first in China, has developed a devoted following for its urbane design, excellent restaurants, and serene ambience.

- 2 The Peninsula**
95.00
- 3 Four Seasons Hotel**
90.15
- 4 Aman Summer Palace**
86.95
- 5 Grand Hyatt**
85.25



▲ NO. 1 CITY HOTEL IN ASIA

The grand lobby of the Rosewood Beijing welcomes guests to the 283-room property.



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This fall, escape to JW Marriott's first Italian resort for gourmet eats, culinary star power, and mindful experiences, as the private island getaway hosts a world-class food and wine festival for the second year.

MEET STAR CHEFS

Come to Italy for an intimate and exclusive event—**Gather Venice, A JW Epicurean & Mindful Experience** at JW Marriott® Venice Resort & Spa—hosted by *Food & Wine* Editor-in-Chief Hunter Lewis and Chef Fabio Trabocchi, who helms the Michelin-starred fine dining restaurant, Fiola at Dopolavoro Venezia. Relish three days of interactive tastings, cooking demos, culinary-focused events, and chef-led experiences—all under the guidance of top names in food, wine, and spirits. Enjoy elite access to food-world luminaries and engaging conversations against the backdrop of a spectacular Venetian lagoon location.

NOURISH BODY AND SOUL

JW Marriott believes in experiencing every minute to the fullest—born from the idea that only when we provide guests with a joyful sense of being fully present, balanced, and full of life, is nourishment truly complete. Alongside their epicurean immersion, festival guests will be treated to mindfulness experiences including meditation and fitness opportunities. Set on Isola delle Rose and linked by boat to St. Mark's Square, the resort has 266 stylish and contemporary-designed rooms and suites, and everything you need to follow your passions—from gourmet dining to the award-winning JW Venice Spa.

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Jonathan Waxman
James Beard Award-winning chef and restaurateur



Ciccio Sultano
Two-Michelin-starred chef and restaurateur



Martina Caruso
Michelin-starred chef



Ray Isle
Food & Wine Executive Wine Editor



Hunter Lewis
Food & Wine Editor-in-Chief



▲ NO. 1 RESORT HOTEL IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

JW Marriott Phu Quoc's bar playfully mimics a chemistry lab.

TOP 3 SHANGHAI HOTELS

1 The Peninsula 93.56

Personalized activities (like visiting a designer's atelier) available through this property near the historic Bund waterfront showcase all this worldly city has to offer: contemporary art, fashion, and superb food.

2 Fairmont Peace Hotel 91.43

3 Grand Hyatt 80.80

TOP 5 TOKYO HOTELS

1 The Ritz-Carlton 94.97

Unparalleled views of the Tokyo skyline and superior accessibility to the city put this cosmopolitan hotel ahead of the competition. A sprawling indoor pool doesn't hurt, either.

2 Shangri-La Hotel 93.50

3 Palace Hotel 92.42

4 The Peninsula 92.30

5 Aman 91.36

TOP 5 INDONESIA RESORT HOTELS

1 The Mulia Bali 98.25

This expansive property has the best access to Nusa Dua's white-sand beaches (and its watersports).

2 Nihi Sumba Sumba Island 96.46

3 Four Seasons Resort Bali at Sayan 95.83

4 Ritz-Carlton Nusa Dua 94.12

5 Four Seasons Resort Bali at Jimbaran Bay 92.31

TOP 10 SOUTHEAST ASIA RESORT HOTELS

1 JW Marriott Phu Quoc Emerald Bay Resort & Spa Vietnam 98.56

Seamlessly merging Vietnamese and French-colonial styles, this palatial resort in a verdant island setting has a playful fictional backstory about its origins as a university, which only adds to its transportive quality.

2 Six Senses Yao Noi, Thailand 97.74

3 Anantara Hua Hin Resort Hua Hin, Thailand 96.24

4 Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort Chiang Rai, Thailand 96.13

5 Six Senses Samui Koh Samui, Thailand 95.75

6 InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort Vietnam 95.66

7 Belmond La Résidence Phou Vao Luang Prabang, Laos 95.37

8 Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai, Thailand 94.71 ★

9 Anantara Chiang Mai Resort Thailand 94.13

10 Four Seasons Resort Koh Samui, Thailand 93.28

TOP 5 INDIA RESORT HOTELS

1 Leela Palace Udaipur 98.89

Glorious hotels can be found throughout Rajasthan, but there's something special about the way this one's rooms put a contemporary spin on the region's design with stunning fabrics, architectural motifs, and hand-crafted details.

2 Taj Lake Palace Udaipur 96.48

3 Oberoi Udaivilas Udaipur 96.20

4 Oberoi Amarvilas Agra 96.08 ★

5 Oberoi Rajvilas Jaipur 95.71 ★

TOP 5 SINGAPORE HOTELS

1 Ritz-Carlton, Millenia 90.34

The building's striking exterior is by Pritzker Prize-

winning architect Kevin Roche; inside, a neutral color palette lets guests focus on the museum-quality artworks from masters like David Hockney and Andy Warhol.

2 Fairmont 90.00

3 Four Seasons Hotel 89.42

4 Grand Hyatt 89.33

5 JW Marriott Hotel Singapore South Beach 89.28

TOP 5 BANGKOK HOTELS

1 Lebua at State Tower 95.43

While staying in one of the city's tallest buildings, guests can soak up sweeping city views as they sip cocktails at the Sky Bar or cool off in the open-air pool.

2 The Siam 93.68

3 The Peninsula 93.19

4 Mandarin Oriental 92.05 ★

5 Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort 90.79

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Africa and the Middle East Hotels

This year's list encompasses urban architectural marvels and tony resorts in striking natural settings, such as Kenya's sweeping Masai Mara National Reserve.

NO. 1 SAFARI LODGE IN AFRICA

Singita Sabi Sand sits along a river, a prime location for wildlife viewing.



TOP 10 AFRICA SAFARI LODGES

- 1 Singita Sabi Sand**
Sabi Sands Game Reserve,
South Africa 98.59

Family-owned since the 1920s, this property shows outstanding attention to both luxury and conservation at its Boulders, Ebony, and Castleton lodges.

- 2 Gibb's Farm**
Karatu,
Tanzania 98.56

- 3 Singita Grumeti**
Serengeti National Park,
Tanzania 98.12

- 4 Bushcamp Company's Mfuwe Lodge**
South Luangwa National Park,
Zambia 97.87

- 5 Londolozi**
Sabi Sands Game Reserve,
South Africa 97.45

- 6 The Highlands**
Ngorongoro Conservation Area,
Tanzania 96.84

- 7 Lion Sands Game Reserve**
Sabi Sands Game Reserve,
South Africa 96.60

- 8 Four Seasons Safari Lodge Serengeti**
Serengeti National Park,
Tanzania 96.22

- 9 andBeyond Bateleur Camp**
Masai Mara National Reserve,
Kenya 96.19

- 10 Matetsi Victoria Falls**
Matetsi Private Game Reserve,
Zimbabwe 95.95

TOP 5 NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST CITY HOTELS

- 1 Royal Mansour**
Marrakesh,
Morocco 97.78

No detail was overlooked when Morocco's King Mohammed VI commissioned this lavish property, which consists of 53 private *riads* surrounded by palms and citrus trees.

- 2 Jumeirah at Etihad Towers**
Abu Dhabi 95.47

- 3 Burj Al Arab Jumeirah**
Dubai 94.27

- 4 La Mamounia**
Marrakesh,
Morocco 93.94

- 5 Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza**
93.82

TOP 5 NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Kasbah Tamadot**
Atlas Mountains,
Morocco 93.80

Richard Branson transformed this former governor's mansion an hour outside Marrakesh into a detour-worthy playground, with a world-class spa and plenty of excursions into the nearby Atlas Mountains.

- 2 Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort**
Jabal Akhdar,
Oman 93.60

- 3 Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach**
92.94

- 4 One&Only Royal Mirage**
Dubai 92.50

- 5 Beresheet**
Mitzpe Ramon,
Israel 91.00

TOP 5 AFRICA CITY HOTELS

- 1 Ellerman House**
Cape Town 97.60

A smartly curated art collection and beautifully designed rooms differentiate this Cape Edwardian mansion from the other options scattered throughout the beloved South African city.

- 2 Saxon Hotel, Villas & Spa**
Johannesburg,
South Africa 96.63 ★

- 3 Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa**
Cape Town 95.06

- 4 Cape Grace**
Cape Town 94.35 ★

- 5 One&Only**
Cape Town 90.45

TOP 5 AFRICA RESORT HOTELS

- 1 La Residence**
Franschhoek,
South Africa 95.11

In the heart of the Cape Winelands, this property set on a 30-acre farm impresses with 16 ultra-chic suites, each with its own distinctive personality.

- 2 andBeyond Mnemba Island**
Zanzibar,
Tanzania 94.89

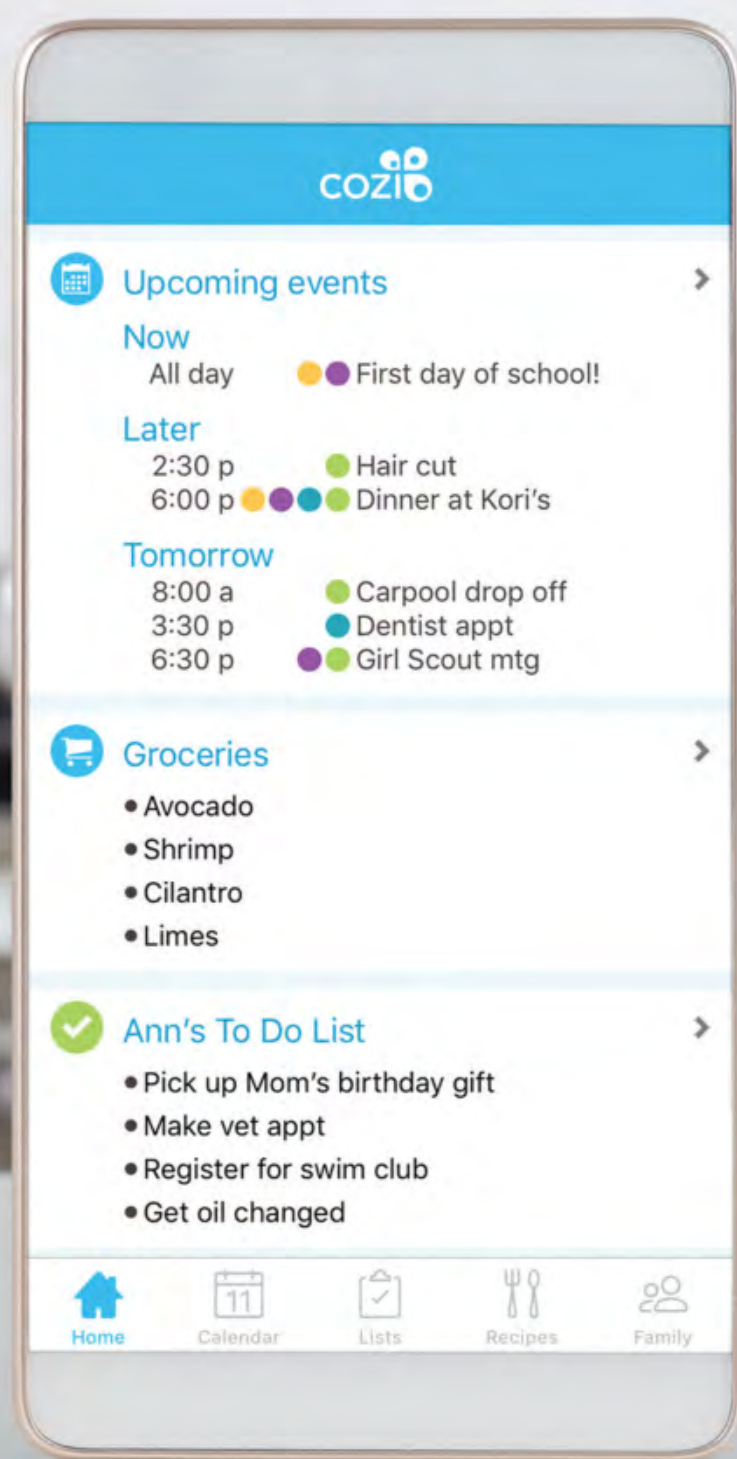
- 3 andBeyond Sossusvlei Desert Lodge**
Namib-Naukluft National Park,
Namibia 92.80

- 4 Birkenhead House**
Hermanus,
South Africa 92.53

- 5 Victoria Falls Safari Lodge**
Zimbabwe 87.76

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Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific Hotels

A feeling of refined wildness characterizes many of the luxurious resort hotels readers rated most highly in this part of the world.

NO. 1 RESORT HOTEL IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

The Farm at Cape Kidnappers pampers its guests in the heart of North Island wine country.

TOP 5 AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Farm at Cape Kidnappers**
Hawke's Bay, New Zealand 98.57

On New Zealand's North Island, this 6,000-acre sheep-and-cattle ranch immerses guests in Kiwi cuisine and rural life at its finest.
- 2 Southern Ocean Lodge**
Kangaroo Island, Australia 97.43
- 3 Matakauri Lodge**
Queenstown, New Zealand 96.27
- 4 Emirates One&Only Wolgan Valley**
Blue Mountains, Australia 94.73
- 5 Lodge at Kauri Cliffs**
Matauri Bay, New Zealand 94.50

TOP 5 SOUTH PACIFIC RESORT HOTELS

- 1 Turtle Island**
Fiji 97.78

Fiji's recent resort boomlet ushered in a handful of glittering options, but none quite as next-level as this jaw-dropper, which boasts 14 couples-only villas that attract guests seeking a laid-back stay.
- 2 Six Senses**
Malolo Island, Fiji 96.44
- 3 St. Regis Bora Bora Resort**
French Polynesia 95.60
- 4 Four Seasons Resort**
Bora-Bora, French Polynesia 91.28
- 5 InterContinental Moorea Resort & Spa**
French Polynesia 83.16

TOP 5 AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND CITY HOTELS

- 1 Park Hyatt**
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THE METHODOLOGY

A survey developed by the editors of *Travel + Leisure*, in association with research firm M&RR, was made available at tlworldsbest.com from November 5, 2018, to March 4, 2019. Readers were invited to participate through *Travel + Leisure* magazine, T+L tablet editions, newsletters, social media, and travandleisure.com. M&RR maintained, monitored, and kept the survey website secure, and also collected and tabulated the responses. To protect the integrity of the data, after the survey closed, *Travel + Leisure* and M&RR screened the responses to identify fraudulent votes, which were eliminated from the final tallies.

Respondents were asked to rate airlines, airports, car-rental agencies, cities, cruise ships, destination spas, hotels, hotel brands, islands, tour operators, and safari outfitters on a number of characteristics (see below). For each characteristic, respondents could choose a rating of excellent, above average, average, below

average, or poor. The final scores are indexed averages of these responses. Scores have been rounded to the nearest hundredth of a point; in the event of a true tie, winners share the same ranking. In most categories, respondents could also rate optional characteristics; these ratings are not included in the overall scores.

Hotels were categorized as City or Resort based on their locations and amenities. For resort hotels, the U.S. was divided into seven regions: California, Florida, Hawaii, Midwest (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin), Northeast (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, D.C.), South (Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West

Virginia), and West (Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming).

For the cruise category, respondents were asked to rate individual ships; the results were combined to generate scores for cruise lines in different categories. The categories are: mega-ship ocean cruise lines (capacity of 2,200 passengers or more), large-ship ocean cruise lines (600 to 2,199 passengers), midsize-ship ocean cruise lines (250 to 599 passengers), small-ship ocean cruise lines (249 or fewer passengers), and river cruise lines. Some cruise lines may appear in multiple categories depending on the makeup of their fleet.

A minimum number of responses was necessary for a candidate to be eligible for inclusion in the World's Best Awards rankings. Some companies were eligible to be rated in multiple categories; they were scored independently for each category.

Airlines Cabin comfort, in-flight service, customer service, value.

Car-rental agencies Vehicle selection, vehicle availability, car-rental location, service, value.

Islands Natural attractions/beaches, activities/sights, restaurants/food, people/friendliness, value.

Hotels Rooms/facilities, location, service, food, value.

Tour operators and safari outfitters Staff/guides, itineraries/destinations, activities, accommodations, food, value.

Airports Access, check-in/security, restaurants/bars, shopping, design.

Cities Sights/landmarks, culture, food, friendliness, shopping, value.

Destination spas Accommodations/facilities, treatments, service, food, value.

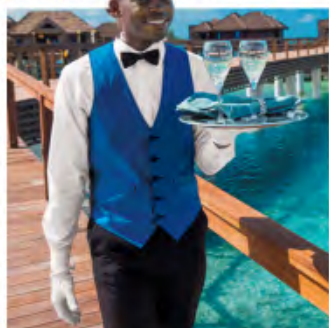
Hotel brands Locations, rooms/facilities, food, service, value.

Cruise ships Cabins/facilities, food, service, itineraries/destinations, excursions/activities, value.

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TRAVEL EDITION

The Intelligent Traveler

TIPS AND TRICKS TO HELP YOU TRAVEL SMARTER

Edited by SARAH BRUNING



Soaring into Another Era

Why JFK's TWA Hotel is the new face of business travel. **BY JULIE LASKY**

A throwback split-flap departures board anchors the Sunken Lounge at the TWA Hotel.



Guest rooms at the TWA Hotel feature Eero Saarinen's iconic Womb chair.

BY THE TIME TWA opened its Trans World Flight Center at Idlewild (now JFK) Airport in 1962, the ambitious building Eero Saarinen designed to symbolize modern air travel was already obsolete. With the silhouette of a gull taking flight, the concrete terminal had been imagined for the age of propeller planes, not jumbo jets, and wasn't prepared for the mobs of travelers who soon filled the skies. This past May, after decades of disuse, the building reopened as a category killer: the ultimate airport hotel.

Revived by MCR Development, the **TWA Hotel** (twahotel.com; doubles from \$249, four-hour blocks from \$139) treats the glamour days of air travel with hero worship and a bit of a wink. A legion of government agencies and preservation groups ensured plenty of mid-century hallmarks remained even as modern updates like an independent energy grid and 5G Wi-Fi were installed. At reception desks styled like ticket counters, front desk workers sport tailored gray plaid, courtesy of Stan Herman, the designer who created TWA's uniforms in 1975. The comings and goings of fictional flights cycle through a pair of freshly built Solari split-flap boards—one of which abuts the sunken cocktail lounge, which pops

with retro-modern molded seats in TWA's geranium red. This 200,000-square-foot lobby is just the beginning: tubular hallways lead to a pair of newly constructed glass wings with a total of 512 guest rooms (half face the original Saarinen structure; the other half, the tarmac). All rooms have blackout curtains, and the windows are 4½ inches thick, which means a round-the-clock hush, whether a guest prefers to plane-peep or rest.

Airport hotels have been around since 1929, when the Oakland Airport erected an inn next to Amelia Earhart's favorite dirt runway. Hilton formalized—and popularized—the concept with the hotel (and famed Tiger-a-Go-Go nightclub) it opened in 1959 at San Francisco International Airport. But as flying became less glamorous, so too did airport accommodations, which devolved into utilitarian hunks of sadness.

With the 2008 debut of **CitizenM Amsterdam Schiphol** (citizenm.com; doubles from \$118), a new breed of airport hotels began to borrow the tactics of boutique hotels—namely, having a strong character and spaces for guests to mingle. Airport hotels “are often used by people who are lone business travelers,” notes Lisa Hassanzadeh, the head of interiors at

Concrete, the Dutch architecture studio behind the Schiphol Airport hotel. The company sought to foster interactions in the public rooms with cheerful furnishings, statement lighting, and art books.

While aviation is a natural theme for designers trying to create an airport hotel's identity, today's crumb-filled seat pockets and economy-class crowding don't exactly inspire. That may be why many new-wave airport hotels recall flying's glorious past. Shortly before the TWA Hotel welcomed its first guests, a new **Citadines Hotel** (citadines.com; doubles from \$88) opened at Sydney Airport with *Mad Men*-era décor and an outdoor rooftop cinema. Others, though, do point the category in a new direction, mostly by channeling their surroundings. A prime example: architecture firm Gensler's award-winning **Westin Denver International Airport** (marriott.com; doubles from \$290), a sleek, double-peaked edifice reminiscent of the Rockies. Or take the **Prodigy Santos Dumont** (prodigyhotels.com.br; doubles from \$71), in Rio de Janeiro, where light woods and floor-to-ceiling windows direct guests' attention to the stunning panoramas of Guanabara Bay.

Still, no other property has a 1962 Saarinen landmark for a lobby—nor can anyone compete with the exuberance of the TWA Hotel's design gestures, both massive (like the 1958 Lockheed Constellation plane converted into a cocktail lounge) and tiny (like the non-plastic swizzle sticks included in every guest room's martini bar). Between the amenities and the architecture, travelers of all stripes—including time-strapped business professionals—might find reasons to prolong their layovers.



Co-working Is Evolving

Over the past decade, shared workspaces proliferated to give digital nomads a place to rest their laptops—but not a place to rest their heads. Meet three global brands pioneering the new co-living trend. **BY JENNIFER SALERNO**

OUTSITE

When tech developer Emmanuel Guisset began working on the road in the early 2010s so he could pursue his surfing passion, he felt drawn to small towns with a better quality of life.

Since those areas often lacked the opportunities of bigger cities, in 2015 he created Outsite. He's grown it into a network of 18 well-situated properties—from San Diego to the Swiss Alps—all with sizable work

spaces and accommodations under one roof. Three more locations are scheduled to open this year. *outsite.co; members from \$58 per night, nonmembers from \$68.*

BEHERE

Meesen Brown envisioned her platform, Behere, as a combination of private dwellings and public spaces. The company now works directly with neighboring businesses to support team-building and incentive-based programs. Locations exist in 11 cities—from Barcelona to Chiang Mai, Thailand—and during the remainder of 2019, Behere

will expand to Austin, Los Angeles, New York City, London, and Paris. In the next two years, it will roll out in 47 cities around the globe. *gobehere.com; from \$1,500 for one month.*

ROAM

Roam targets larger spaces, such as former boutique hotels and boardinghouses. Its outposts in five cities, including Miami and Tokyo, have different creative nooks in their common areas. (In San Francisco, there's a "maker-space," complete with sewing machines and laser cutters.) *roam.co; from \$440 for one week.*

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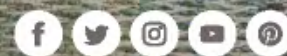
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Business-class fliers on Singapore Airlines can preorder meals up to 24 hours ahead.

Best in Business (Class)

Enclosed suites, menus by celebrity chefs, and amenity kits with exclusive beauty products are bringing a new level of luxury to the skies. **BY ERIC ROSEN**

OVERNIGHT TRANSATLANTIC JAUNTS? No problem. Fifteen hours across the Pacific? A breeze! Long-haul flights are practically a weekly occurrence for me. But even I was apprehensive about embarking on Singapore Airlines' 19-hour Newark-to-Singapore nonstop, which became the longest flight in the world when it launched last fall.

Turns out, I needn't have worried. The Airbus A350-900 that flies the route features a more ergonomic version of Singapore Airlines' already outstanding business-class seats. The 78-inch bed meant that I could actually get restorative sleep on the more than 10,000-mile trip. And technical innovations on the A350-900s (also used by Qatar Airways, Lufthansa, and Cathay Pacific), like a higher humidity level, provide a less fatiguing passenger experience. Singapore has also partnered with spa and wellness brand Canyon Ranch to create a healthy menu for the new flight. For lunch, I feasted on braised grass-fed-beef short ribs with turmeric-cauliflower mash, oyster mushrooms, and grilled asparagus—a light yet flavorful meal ahead of my visit to Singapore's famed hawker stalls.

Even more exciting for long-haul business-class fliers has been the introduction of suite-style seats with closing doors. Qatar Airways led the

charge with its revolutionary QSuites aboard some A350s and Boeing 777s—first launched in June 2017 and recently expanded to new routes, including Doha to Boston and Chicago. Certain seat blocs can be combined into two- or four-passenger sections that are ideal for socializing or working. My solo window suite felt ultra-exclusive thanks to its sliding door and do-not-disturb light. The ability to dine on demand, rather than having to eat at set times, gave me a feeling of flexibility akin to flying private.

Delta Airlines' new Delta One Suites aboard its newest Airbuses and some Boeing 777s also feature closing doors. Without the disruptions of crew members wheeling service trolleys and other passengers tripping down the aisle for mid-flight bathroom breaks, I could nod off quickly, snuggled under plush Westin Heavenly Bedding. The airline's product partnerships with luxury brands—including Tumi toiletry kits with basil-scented Le Labo products—add additional allure to the experience. I wouldn't mind having the airline's Alessi tableware at home, either; it provides a stylish setting for meals from celebrity chefs like Jereme Leung, whose savory Shaanxi *biang biang* noodles gave me one last taste of China on my flight from Shanghai to Los Angeles.

Suitcase Solutions

Each of these carryalls is ideal for a different length of stay. **BY MADELINE BILIS**

1. OVERNIGHT

To streamline packing, **Hook & Albert's** leather Garment Weekender folds out into a garment bag for wrinkle-reducing dress and suit storage. Shoe pockets and two accessory pouches help with meeting-to-dinner quick changes. \$640, hookandalbert.com.

2. THREE TO FIVE DAYS

TravelPro's new Crew VersaPack enhances the brand's professional-grade pieces with interchangeable storage solutions, such as zip-in organizers to stash chargers and other essentials. \$229, travelpro.com.

3. MORE THAN FIVE DAYS

Ideal for a long conference, **Briggs & Riley's** large expandable spinner features the brand's CX compression system, which increases your packing space by a third. A lifetime warranty means you never have to worry about your bag getting roughed up. From \$594, briggs-riley.com.



Bleisure— the Right Way

As our professional and personal spheres continue to overlap, it's up to us to maximize travel that blends both. Wellness advocate and entrepreneur **ARIANNA HUFFINGTON** weighs in on how.

"ARE YOU TRAVELING for business or leisure?" The answer that's becoming more and more common is: both. The idea of merging business and leisure on the same trip is one of the hottest trends in travel—so much so that it has spawned the term *bleisure*.

According to data from SAP Concur, a travel and expense-management company, the number of bleisure trips—where travelers tack on a day or two for leisure on either end of a business trip—increased 20 percent from 2016 to 2017. Like so many other trends, this one is being driven by millennials.

In theory, there's nothing wrong with the concept, especially if it encourages people to use vacation time. But does it work in practice? Can you resist the impulse to "just check in" with the office, especially on what started as a work trip? In short, can you set clear boundaries? (Most can't: 27 percent not only fail to unplug, but check in several times a day.) If you're reading your work e-mail while getting a massage, you're defeating the purpose of both.

The boundaries between business and leisure are already in shambles. According to a recent study by the U.S. Travel Association's Project: Time Off, 52 percent of American workers reported having unused vacation time. Respondents who cited work concerns were least likely to take time off. Their reasons? Fear of looking replaceable, concern over managing their workload, and feeling like they had no one to cover them.

Workers worldwide need to unplug more than ever. We're in the midst of a global epidemic of stress and burnout, fueled by antiquated and downright

wrong ideas about the importance of unplugging. Because our devices make it possible for us to work all the time, we think we should. The result is that too many people equate downtime with wasted time. It's because work and rest are so deeply connected that we need to be so deliberate about separating the two. Studies show that the way to be better at your job is to be better at taking time off from it.

As we've come to realize, the ways we'd like to use technology (*I can put my phone down whenever!*) are different from the ways we do use technology (*OMG, where's my phone?!).* Hopefully millennials can blaze the trail on bleisure. They certainly need to: according to a survey by the travel firm Allianz Global Assistance, millennial workers are least likely to use their vacation time. They're also most likely to suffer from "vacation

shaming," where guilt and/or pressure from colleagues or supervisors keeps them from taking their deserved PTO.

The line between work and rest is a lot easier to draw at the airport before you leave, rather than in the middle of the trip, and you can't achieve the kind of separation you need to truly unplug without physically separating from your devices. But to do it means being even more deliberate about establishing expectations and boundaries. Let your colleagues know exactly when the business is ending and the leisure is beginning. Set up an out-of-office auto-reply that includes information about who is covering for you in your absence. In short, the old rules of vacationing productively still apply. Lots of clear communication and advance planning will help bleisure strike a much-needed blow against burnout, instead of becoming just another way to fuel it.

Arianna Huffington is the founder and CEO of Thrive Global, a wellness company tackling the stress and burnout epidemic.



52

Percentage of Americans who don't use all of their allotted vacation time

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▼
A Quinta da Auga, a boutique hotel in Spain's Galicia region.





ROAD TO GALICIA

Stormy and romantic, the northwestern corner of Spain has an emerald-green terrain that lends itself to wine growing and a sweeping coastline that supplies Europe with fresh seafood. STEPHEN METCALF follows a mouthwatering trail of tapas, finds peace in a city of pilgrims, savors the region's celebrated Albariño, and delights in the local blend of humility and pride.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SALVA LÓPEZ

*Cape Finisterre,
on Galicia's
western coast.*

When your plane lands

in Galicia, you leave behind the Spain of sun, sand, and bullfights. You are now in the heart of what is known as “green Spain,” the rain-soaked band running across the top of the country. Galicia feels more like County Cork or Midcoast Maine than the dry, dusty Iberian Peninsula. Its shoreline is a series of *rías*, inlets shaped by ragged granite formations where ancient lighthouses look out on fishing floats and crab-pot markers and mussel rafts.

Once in Galicia, you have also left behind a wealthier, more globalized Europe. Galicia is not slick. For centuries it has occupied an odd place in the national imagination. The 16th-century poet Lope de Vega describes Galicia as a filthy region, associated with dirty taverns and coarse women. Spanish children shout “Last one’s a Galician” to start a footrace. How casually Galicia is insulted is intimately related to how fulsomely it is romanticized. Another man of letters,

▼
Fumarel, a wine bar and grocery in the town of Ribadeo.



the early-20th-century novelist Victoriano García Martí, a native, wrote that “Galicia has a lunar soul.”

To travel there today is to discover a place that never lost its traditional bearings, but has also evolved. It is home to one of the world’s largest fashion companies (Inditex, parent of Zara), its wines are gaining international recognition, and chefs are zeroing in on it for its agricultural riches. Meals, no matter how exquisitely fashioned, taste like where they come from: the farm, the sea.

A CORUÑA, AN OLD MILITARY and commercial port, occupies a part of northwestern Galicia that pokes out into the Atlantic. My hotel—the calm and airy Meliã Maria Pita—overlooked the long curve of the city’s beach. I lucked out and arrived on the first warm spring weekend. Even in the crisp April breezes, Galicians were getting their sun on, undressing on the sand, letting the icy waves lick their feet.

On my first evening, I met John Barlow, an Englishman who has lived in A Coruña for 18 years. “Most of Spain cooks in olive oil,” he told me. “In Galicia, they still use pig fat, too.” Barlow’s book, *Everything but the Squeal*, is a gastronomic journey through every hidden pocket of the region. “The Romans came here and loved it,” he said as we wandered the city’s serpentine alleys, away from the booming of the surf. “They found wine and seafood, and sent it back in barrels.”

We arrived at Los Vinos, a tangle of winding streets lined with tavernas and bars. According to tradition, each establishment specializes in one dish, with some offering only a single tapa, served gratis or for a euro or so, to go with your drink. You wander from joint to joint, having a beer or wine in a *cunca*, a cup that is more like a small, wide-mouthed bowl, filled to the brim. By the end of the evening, you have had a cheap and balanced meal. “You get drunk and fed, and you exercise,” said Barlow, as we walked off our omelette on our way to ham, peanuts, octopus, and chorizo.

In the 1920s, A Coruña emerged as the financial capital of the region, and today it is the most bourgeois Galician city. But when Barlow first arrived, he told me, it still had the slightly unsavory air of many old European ports, with black-market cigarettes for sale at the bars and drugs coming in from South America. A Coruña has never shaken its raffish seaside charm, though as we walked, Barlow scoffed at how sushi joints are displacing the old tavernas.

I’ve strolled through plenty of old quarters, but there is something about A Coruña: how conversation bounces off the walls; how everyone invades your space, but no one gets angry. Praza de María Pita, the generous main square, is edged by ornate buildings, each with Galicia’s distinctive *galerías*, the elaborately mullioned-glass-enclosed balconies. In the middle is the titanic Palacio Municipal, with its arched colonnade and three domed towers. The setting is pompously, laughably royalist, but the locals use it blithely. At midnight, dozens of laughing children were running through it.



◀ The medieval streets of Santiago de Compostela.

Barlow and I consumed fresh octopus, a pork nubbin that turned into a warm fatty liquid on my tongue, wisps of Iberian ham, and an astounding quantity of beer—and paid almost nothing. As the night petered out, we talked about the idea of *morriña*, a keening and melancholy homesickness, the rough Galician equivalent of the Portuguese *saudade*. I was already feeling it for Galicia.

GALLEGO, THE GALICIAN LANGUAGE, is a style of communicating that, as Barlow has written, “gives you the impression that you’re being wrapped in a thick blanket of rhetoric and playfulness.” I experienced this firsthand the following day in Ribadeo, a little coastal town that takes raffishness to the next level. From Ribadeo it’s a short drive to Playa de las Catedrales, a beach populated by natural rock



▲
Sombrerería Iglesias, a century-old hat shop in Santiago de Compostela.

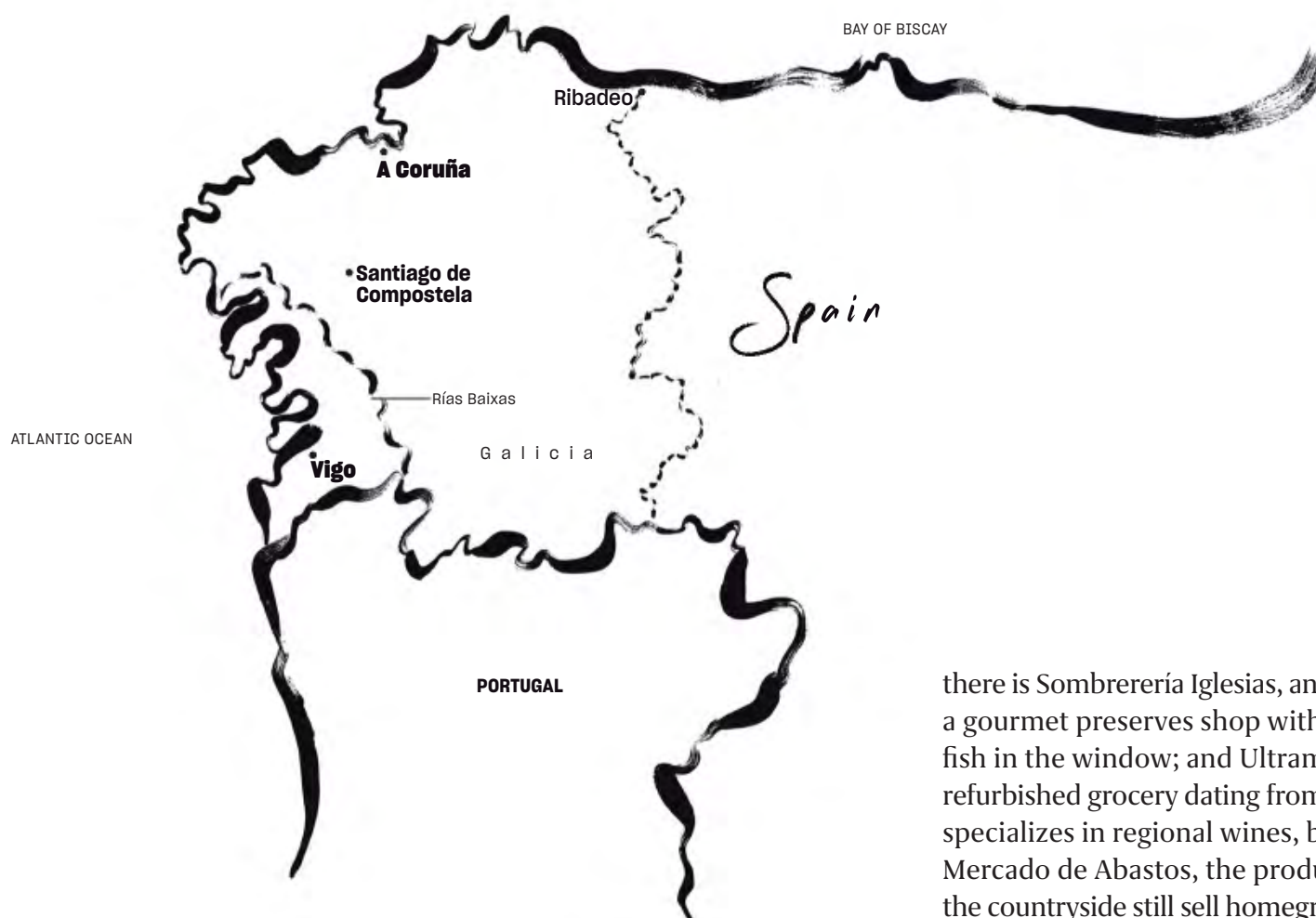
◀
A room at A Quinta da Auga, a luxury resort and spa in Santiago de Compostela that occupies an 18th-century building.

formations that resemble the arches of a Gothic cathedral. At low tide, they stand 90 feet above the water's surface.

Wandering Ribadeo under close gray skies, the air pungent with the receding sea, I came across Fumarel, a wine bar that is also a café, fish market, delicatessen, and nightclub. Its interior has a cosmopolitan polish that, by Galician standards, is unexpected, even a bit modish. The walls are lined with superbly hand-wrought cabinetry filled with an array of Galician wines. Over a glass of the region's famous Albariño and a freshly caught mackerel, I watched as the proprietor's daughter, Paula, managed business—shipments, a broken cash register, early lunchers—with a fist of gentle iron. She introduced me to her brother, Nuño. Improbably tall, bearded, and, in that distinctively Galician way, somehow gentle and fierce at the same time, he

explained with quiet pride how he and his father, Gervasio Cao, built Fumarel with their own hands.

Everywhere in Galicia I found this same attitude. It is what I loved most about the place. In Santiago de Compostela, the chef Francisco Piñeiro is gaining renown for his modernist twists on traditional Galician fare, but he speaks humbly about what he does. His restaurant, A Horta do Obradoiro, is housed in a 17th-century building a few steps from the city's famous main square. Three hundred thousand tourists pass Piñeiro's door every year as they approach the square's iconic cathedral, which marks the end of the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage routes, the longest of which runs nearly 500 miles, beginning in the French Pyrenees. But Piñeiro insists that his place is "by locals, for locals." He created A Horta to honor his father, a sailor. As I sipped Caiño Tinto, a tart red, a waiter dropped a



The garden at
A Horta do Obradoiro,
a restaurant in Santiago
de Compostela.

netted sack of cockerels on the table. Piñeiro's way with shellfish—and, yes, a pig's ear—is heavenly, but all he will say is, "I'm not a chef. I'm a cook."

Piñeiro led me to the backyard, a miniature garden with a view of the cathedral spires. They hovered so near, I felt like I could flick them with my finger. The remains of the apostle James are said to lie in a silver casket beneath the altar. Thanks to this holy relic, Christians have been coming to Santiago—after Rome and Jerusalem, the third holiest destination in Christendom—since the Middle Ages. Since the 1990s, government officials have tried to turn Santiago and its pilgrimage into a tourist phenomenon. They hit upon a winning formula. A marketing campaign that featured Julio Iglesias, "son of Galicia," rebranded El Camino away from Christian piety and toward a New Age-y ethos of personal growth. Traffic increased tenfold.

The route is almost at full capacity. Trinket and T-shirt shops encircle the cathedral. Selfie sticks abound. And yet, standing in Praza do Obradoiro, I immediately felt its spirit of fellowship and grace. Those who make the journey do so, by and large, reverently. For its part, Santiago is a town determined to remain itself.

Barlow writes that, from a distance, Santiago "looks like a drinks party for a group of very important buildings held in a place not quite big enough for the occasion." Its skyline feels hewn, he says, from a block of granite. And yet, up close, it is a city of shops. Tucked unobtrusively into the arcades,

there is Sombrerería Iglesias, an old hat shop; Catrineta, a gourmet preserves shop with an assortment of canned fish in the window; and Ultramarinos Carro, a stylishly refurbished grocery dating from the 19th century that specializes in regional wines, beers, and cheeses. In the Mercado de Abastos, the produce market, the women from the countryside still sell homegrown goods in little outdoor naves. When dusk falls, Santiago feels like what it has been since the 15th century: a college town.

At the first breath of evening, outside Bar La Tita, a legendary student watering hole, young people from the University of Santiago de Compostela sat among the columns of the granite colonnade, smoking, gossiping, waiting for a table. In the jostle inside, I spoke with Romina López, a graduate of the university who is now a licensed tour guide. "Galicians have always been separate," she said emphatically. "Between the ocean and the mountains, we have always been another country. They thought we were stupid, our accent absurd. But we survive." López's grandfather fought in the Spanish Civil War, though not, like George Orwell, against



*Casona de
Labrada, a hotel
near A Pontenova
in a restored
country estate.*





▲ From left: A dish of marinated tomato, local cheese, and corn at Maruja Limón, a Michelin-starred restaurant in Vigo; Marina Betanzos, a mariscadora, or fisherwoman, in Pontevedra.

Meals, no matter how exquisitely fashioned, taste like where they come from: the farm, the sea.

the Fascists. He was 16 and, after the Fascists prevailed, found himself indentured for six years to one of Franco's generals as a chauffeur.

Franco was from Galicia; perhaps that is why he was so brutal to it. The region was, as one historian put it, Franco's "larder for human capital and food" during the war. Afterward, in an attempt to create a single national identity, a fully homogenous Spain unified by dictatorship, he pushed Gallego underground. It became a fugitive language. López pointed out the voices emanating from the tables. "They are free to speak Galician." And yet the patrons also appeared to be so young, healthy, and ebullient that we could have been anywhere in the EU.

EN ROUTE FROM A CORUÑA to Santiago de Compostela, I spent two idyllic nights at Casona de Labrada, an ancient stone homestead on the outskirts of A Pontenova, an old iron-mining village. After crawling over miles of uneven dirt roads, I was greeted first by a bank of Tesla chargers, then by Casona's owner, Susana Sanz. "I met the estate agent, saw the property, and fell in love," Sanz said, before telling me the story of the painstaking, years-long restoration. The farmhouses, barn, granaries, and chapel were so neglected

that they were practically melting into the ground. She worked closely with local stonemasons ("they know these old walls"), who refurbished the property impeccably.

Sanz, a smartly attired Madrileña, has brought a cosmopolitan touch to this forgotten corner of Spain. Casona, embedded in a UNESCO-designated Biosphere Reserve, is surrounded on all sides by forests, meadows, and endless views. Indoors, the stone, wood, and slate structures are now casually chic. Along with her husband, whose background is in sustainable energy, Sanz has turned Casona into a model of rural reinvigoration.

I found a similar story on the outskirts of Santiago, where Luisa Lorenzo's family has rescued an all-but-abandoned 18th-century paper mill and turned it into a four-star hotel. A Quinta da Auga is a small, self-contained paradise on 2½ acres along the small river that once powered the mill. After six years of renovation, A Quinta—which had also been a textile factory and a brewery—now feels like an ageless rural manor. Most of its 51 rooms are outfitted with oak floors, marble baths, and lacquered antiques.

A TRUE PAZO—a style of country estate unique to Galicia—typically contains an elevated granary, known as an *hórreo*.

Usually made of stone, this iconic structure has a tiled roof and stands high on pillars to make it inaccessible to vermin. *Hórreos* are functional, but also status symbols. “You know how powerful a family is by how big their *hórreo* is,” said Javier Izurieta at Pazo de Señorans, a winery in Rías Baixas, Galicia’s wine country, “and that is best established by how many pillars it rests on.” He insists that theirs, with 10 pillars, is one of the biggest in the region. But this is no shame. The biggest is owned by the church.

All of the *pazos* I visited had buildings and grounds that reflected taste and self-possession without a trace of arrogance. Such life-affirming modesty made me think of a phrase López used: “In Galicia, we live close to the primary sector.” As late as the 1920s, Galicia’s economy was quasi-feudal. Laborers were granted access to a plot of land in return for an annual rent or tribute of grain or livestock. When an agricultural depression hit, making farming unprofitable, landholders sold their properties to their indentured laborers; overnight, this created a culture of family farms, each operating with a high degree of self-sufficiency.

Even the larger wine producers source from these tiny family-run vineyard-gardens, where the owners used to grind up mussel and cockle shells for fertilizer and string up lines of sardines to keep pests away. Galicia has been getting attention recently for its wonderful red wines, but it is best

▼
Playa de las Catedrales, a beach in Ribadeo where arched stone formations evoke a cathedral ceiling.



Exploring Galicia

Budget a week or so to take in the region’s atmospheric cities, rustic inns, wine estates, and rugged, dramatic coastline.

Getting There

A Coruña’s airport connects to Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, and London. Rent a car and drive south through Santiago de Compostela and the Rías Baixas wine country to Vigo.

A Coruña

Most of the 178 rooms at the **Meliâ María Pita** (melia.com; doubles from \$125) have ocean views. The best way to experience the city is by wandering through Los Vinos, the tapas streets, at night, following your nose and the raucous crowds.

La Bombilla (7 Rúa Galera) is a legendary watering hole. **Tasca a Cunquiña** (1 Praza do Humor) is the place to get a cup of cheap country wine. **Casa de Comidas Momos** (16 Rúa Santo Domingo) is a sweet little café serving a gooey omelette tapa. **La Leonesa** (fb.com/jamonerialaleonesa) is a ham paradise.

Ribadeo

Visit the wonderful café-cum-wine-bar **Fumarel** (4 Rúa Doutor Moreda). Then stay at the exquisite **Casona de Labrada** (casonadelabrada.com; doubles from \$116), a half-hour’s drive south in A Pontenova.

Santiago de Compostela

A Quinta da Auga (aquinta daauga.com; doubles from \$226) is a boutique hotel with a fine restaurant and spa away from the hubbub of downtown. Both **A Horta do Obradoiro** (ahortado obradoiro.com; entrées \$8–\$18) and **Casa Marcelo** (casamarcelo.net; entrées

\$10–\$50), off the cathedral square, offer contemporary twists on traditional Galician cuisine. For drinks, **Bar La Tita** (fb.com/latita compostela) is a rowdy must. Seek out the city’s hidden shops, including **Sombrerería Iglesias** (sombriereriaiglesias.es), a hat seller; **Catrineta** (catrineta.com), which specializes in canned fish; and **Ultramarinos Carro** (6 Cantón do Toural), a venerable grocery.

Rías Baixas

Stay a night or two in A Pontevedra, the capital of the Rías Baixas wine region, at the gracious **Parador de Turismo de Pontevedra** (parador.es/pontevedra; doubles from \$145). From there you can venture out to the *pazos* for tastings. A visit to **Pazo de Señorans** (pazode senorans.com) is a delight. A 30-minute drive from Pontevedra, Cambados is a charming coastal town that is home to the elegant country estate **Bodega Gil Armada** (bodegagilarmada.com); **Pazo Baión** (pazo baion.com) is nearby.

Vigo

Vigo is a delightful walking city, especially near and along the busy waterfront. There you will find **Maruja Limón** (4 Rúa Montero Ríos, 34-986-473-406; tasting menu \$74) and the superb creations of its star chef, Rafa Centeno. The beautifully executed tasting menu is worth a Galician pilgrimage all by itself. **Hotel NH Collection Vigo** (nh-collection.com; doubles from \$135) is a 108-room hotel in the heart of the city. — S.M.





From left: The vineyards at Pazo Baión, a winery in Rías Baixas; the tasting room at Fumarel.

known for its world-class whites, which it has produced since the 1970s. Its beloved Albariño soaks up granite from the soil and salinity from the Atlantic air, making for a wine that is fresh, salty, floral, tart, and mineral, all at once. The most established wineries are concentrated around five estuaries on the western coast. Their shape, according to the Galician spin on the creation myth, is the handprint of God, who rested there on the seventh day.

Rain is frequent, and land, river, and sea seem to mingle into a single thing. The ubiquity of water means vines must be suspended from pergolas so they don't rot. It also means an abundance of women winemakers. In centuries past, Galician men went to sea, often for months at a time—and sometimes forever. As a consequence, López told me emphatically, "Women ran everything." I found this tradition alive and well in Rías Baixas. Pazo de Señorans, which put Albariño on the global map, was founded by Marisol Bueno, whose daughter continues to manage the estate. Botega Gil Armada, at the grand Pazo de Fefiñáns, is headed by a two sisters. Martín Códax, a large exporter, has a woman winemaker, as does Pazo Baión, a high-achieving upstart.

On my last day in Galicia, I waded into the icy bay off Cambados to see the *mariscadoras*, the women who rake up the prized shellfish that gets shipped to restaurants throughout Europe. You can walk a hundred yards into the low tide and still only be up to your shins, but the cold of the water and air penetrates your bones. Overhead came a clap of thunder, followed by pelting hail. But it was only when the tide began to rise that the *mariscadoras* returned to shore to have their bounty weighed for auction. Under a corrugated metal roof booming from the rain, they hung up their neoprene gear and gathered around the vending machines, where they let out gentle peals of laughter.

I spent the last night of my trip in Vigo, Galicia's biggest city and the largest fishing port in Europe. Vigo has wide, almost Parisian boulevards and a quaint waterfront. I ate at the Michelin-starred Maruja Limón, where every bite is a miniature wonder. A similar meal can be had in any relatively affluent city. But not *this* meal, which was one of the best I've ever had. For all its surface ostentations, it was Galician to the core: rustic, humble, and fierce in its attachment to the primary materials of life. ✦



ALL



EYES

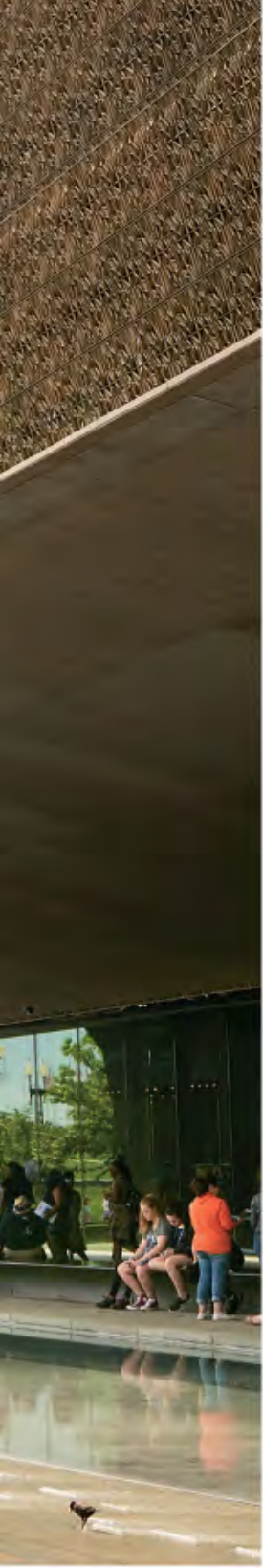
▲
Clockwise from top left:
A salad at the Filipino
restaurant Bad Saint;
the National Museum of
African American
History & Culture; near
Meridian Hill Park, in
Adams Morgan; Brothers
and Sisters, at the Line DC.

O N

D.C.

It's not just the antics of our politicians that have trained America's attention on the capital. It's also the city itself, and the way it seems to have transformed so quickly as to become almost unrecognizable. But even as longtime denizens lament the loss of the old haunts, a host of creative entrepreneurs is busy dreaming up the new neighborhood classics. **LILLIAN LI** heads inside the Beltway to explore the Washington that was, and the Washington that will be.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MACKENZIE STROH



From left:
The Line DC, in
Adams Morgan;
the Hometown
newsstand at the
downtown hotel
Eaton DC.

THE SMELL OF FISH SAUCE, pungent and tantalizing, greeted me as soon as I walked through the door of Thip Khao, the first Laotian restaurant in Washington, D.C. I'd taken a leisurely stroll from my hotel in homey Adams Morgan to this four-year-old restaurant in the historically diverse neighborhood of Columbia Heights.

My first meal in the District would be family-style in more ways than one: I was to dine with the chefs and co-owners, Seng Luangrath, who came to the United States as a refugee from Laos in her teens, and Bobby Pradachith, Luangrath's American-born son.

The plates came out in rapid succession: plump and juicy *piing hua jai kai*, grilled chicken hearts that slid off their skewers with just the slightest sticky resistance; ingenious *muu som*, pork belly cured with fermented rice, which gave the meat a tangy bite. When I brashly claimed to love spicy food, the chefs passed me a plate of *tam muk houn phet phet*, a papaya salad with a scattering of peppers peeking through the pale strands. A moment after my first bite, the heat hit me—the peppers were bird's-eye chiles. My forehead broke out in a sweat and I clutched the sticky rice in my hand like a stress ball. My companions laughed good-naturedly at the look on my face.

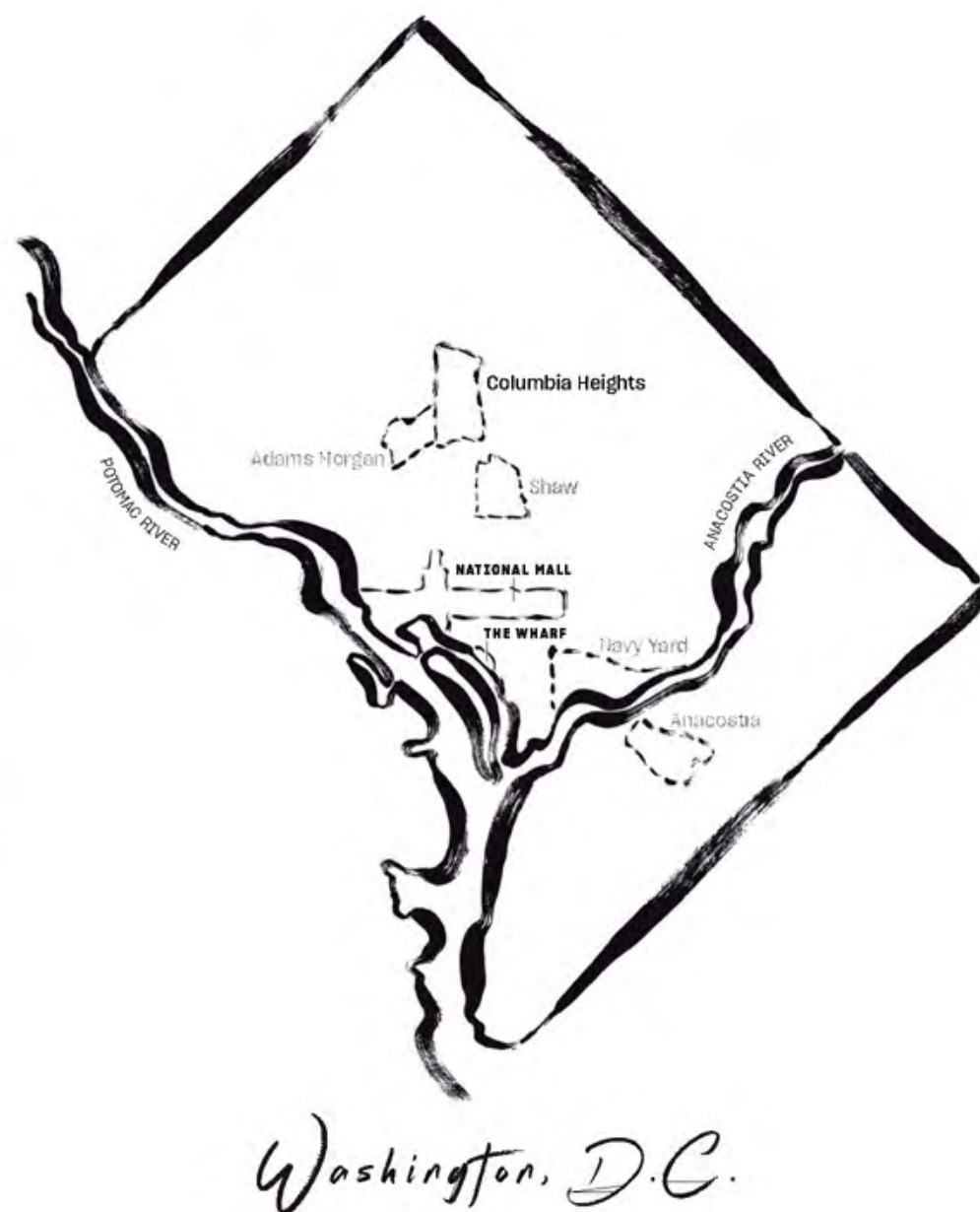
Not so long ago, it would have seemed impossible for one of D.C.'s most talked-about restaurants to be located in Columbia Heights. But now the neighborhood's 11th Street corridor, once lined with vacant storefronts, is a destination for restaurants and nightlife. High-rise condos have sprouted among the quiet row houses. And the very existence of a Laotian restaurant in D.C. reflects the evolving tastes and desires of the city's residents. Chef Luangrath found herself serving so many D.C. diners at her popular first restaurant, Bangkok Golden, in Falls Church, Virginia—an outpost of a Thai chain she took over and later renamed Paedek—that she finally decided to bring her cooking to where they lived.

Since 2009, D.C.'s population has grown by more than 100,000. Last year it surpassed 700,000 for the first time since 1975, the year the funk band Parliament came out with "Chocolate City," its legendary ode to D.C.'s resilient African-American population. From the 1950s until the 2010 census, Washington, D.C., was a majority-black city, but that's changed with the recent influx, which has been predominantly white. Led by millennials, who now make up more than one-third of the population, the newcomers have brought energy and money to once-quiet residential areas like Shaw and Petworth and streets like 14th and U.



D.C.'s new demographics, ironically, are tied in part to excitement over the country's first black president, who brought idealistic young people to national politics. Meanwhile, the recession that was under way when Obama took office lured transplants from pricier coastal capitals. Developers followed the money. In 2008, Columbia Heights got D.C. USA, the largest development in the city. That same year, local government approved financing for what would become a \$2.5 billion deal to overhaul the Southwest Waterfront into the Wharf, a shiny new playground on a channel off the Potomac with a concert venue, three hotels, and dozens of restaurants. Farther east, along the Anacostia River, is D.C.'s fastest-growing neighborhood, the Navy Yard, and a spiffy new park, the Yards, with a pedestrian bridge over the river.

All this has been great for travelers. There are new cultural attractions, like the National Museum of African American History & Culture and the newly expanded International Spy Museum, tony hotels, and more delicious things to eat than ever before, giving visitors options far beyond the 10-block radius around the National Mall, which used to be where you went when you went to D.C. But this kind of wholesale reinvention has introduced a particularly vivid version of the same problem many American urban centers have been grappling with: How does a city allow for progress without pushing out the very people who've



made it what it is? How do you create room for the future without losing the past?

THOUGH I GREW up half an hour outside D.C., in Montgomery County, Maryland, I witnessed none of these developments firsthand. My hometown is technically inside the Beltway—which refers to the ring that Interstate 495 makes around the District and its suburbs in Maryland and Virginia—but the only D.C. thing about me is my 202 area code. As I embarked on my week in the capital, I carried with me a specific strain of anxiety that is familiar to any kid from the suburbs heading into the big city.

When my cab pulled up to the Line DC, in Adams Morgan, Ficra, my driver, and I both stared up at the Neoclassical building standing before us. A wide set of stairs, the kind a little kid who's just seen *Rocky* for the first time would want to run up, led to six massive sandstone pillars that sandwiched the hotel's doors. As I climbed them, Ficra hesitated at the curb, wanting to make sure I'd come to the right place.

Despite the imposing façade, the two-year-old hotel is meant to be a neighborhood spot. Formerly the First Church of Christ, Scientist, it was built in 1912 and had been vacant since the early 90s. Sydel Group, the developer behind the Line, kept more than just the face of the church—there are refurbished pews, hymn boards, and even the old organ, the

Genevieve Villamora (left), owner of the Columbia Heights restaurant *Bad Saint*, dines there with a friend.



brass pipes of which now dangle two stories in the air in a large, imposing cube. My room had a stylish if slightly self-conscious warmth, with colorful throw rugs, framed thrift-store ephemera, and an "air-purifying" snake plant, listed in the guest services binder as an in-room amenity. The Line also touts its Community Center, a public space that local nonprofits and artists can apply to use.

Jack Inslee, who runs Full Service, the hotel's radio station, emphasized the Line's role in the neighborhood. "That's why we have glass walls when cement ones would be better for sound," he told me, gesturing to the transparent partitions that can be folded back like an accordion. "We want to see the people, and vice versa." As I looked around the lobby at the guests sitting on the dark blue sectionals, in the batik booths, and at the long library tables, I thought that the Line did seem to capture the new D.C. I saw a diversity of race, gender, and even age. The only thing that

everyone appeared to have in common was that they were all impeccably, expensively dressed.

But there is something else that unites these representatives of the new D.C.: they're hungry. And many of the restaurants that serve them, themselves a diverse lot, strive, like the Line, to be neighborhood places. I had lunch at one, the year-old Green Almond Pantry, a long, narrow, sunlit space in Shaw, a formerly majority-black enclave bordered on the north by Howard University. On my way, I walked past vibrant, freshly painted row houses, many with Sotheby's signs in their front yards.

I had come to meet Genevieve Villamora, the co-owner of Bad Saint, a Filipino restaurant in Columbia Heights. Over a slice of leek-and-hazelnut tart and a meze plate so delicate that it defied my understanding of red peppers, she told me how much the city has changed since she arrived 25 years ago. "I can't walk down a street anymore without thinking about what used to be there," she told me as she tore off a piece of focaccia. "And people who came later will never know. Or they'll have their own ghosts to remember."

Villamora is typical of a new cohort of D.C. entrepreneurs who are redefining the city while striving to ensure that longtime residents still have a place at the table. Her restaurant, which she opened in 2015 in the midst of Columbia Heights' transformation, is known for its long lines and egalitarian hospitality. "We don't want to operate within a bubble, we want to be a part of the neighborhood," she said. Hiring longtime locals, Villamora explained, has helped Bad Saint feel rooted even as its national profile has soared. "Many of our customers visit from far-flung corners of the world, but a lot of them are still people we run into at the grocery store or at the corner bar down the street."

The day after I met Villamora, I took a Lyft to the Wharf. On a Wednesday afternoon, there were few people strolling its



From far left:
The Contemplation
Court at the
National Museum of
African American
History & Culture;
a staffer at Tiki TNT,
a tropical-themed
bar at the Wharf.



A Rake's Progress, a restaurant within the Line DC that showcases mid-Atlantic ingredients.

The cuisines of the Middle East, North Africa, and the Caucasus are the focus at Maydan, in Cardozo.

waterfront walkway, but I found a cheerful crowd as soon as I entered Officina, chef Nick Stefanelli's three-story Italian marketplace-restaurant-rooftop bar. Like the rest of the Wharf, Officina still has a just-out-of-the-package shine, from the marble counters to the glass case displaying house-made sausages. The olive oil on my *vitello tonnato*, the pasta in my *bigoli all'anatra* (a thick spaghetti with duck sauce), even the torrone gelato in my dessert—which tasted, no joke, the way the cool side of your pillow feels—were all for sale in the market downstairs. Stefanelli told me he had polled D.C.'s Italian community to see which hard-to-find treats he might stock for them. By the time I left, lines of cars were idling in the Wharf's drop-off zones, delivering people in steady droves.

Probably the most famous

(Continued on page 180)

How to Explore D.C.

Venture beyond the National Mall to see some of the city's most compelling corners.

Where to Stay

The **Line DC** (thelinehotel.com; doubles from \$199), in Adams Morgan, is stylish, with excellent dining (try the "next vacation cake" at Brothers & Sisters). Downtown, **Eaton DC** (eatonworkshop.com; doubles from \$199), the brainchild of hotelier Katherine Lo, has rooms stocked with books by Ta-Nehisi Coates and Shirley Chisholm. Other new additions include the 360-room **Conrad** (conradhotels.com; doubles from \$339) and the timelessly elegant **Dupont Circle Hotel** (thedupontcirclehotel.com; doubles from \$229).

Where to Eat & Drink

At the Wharf, go to **Officina** (officinadc.com; entrées \$18–\$68) for Italian fare and **Tiki TNT** (tikitnt.com) for tropical cocktails. Filipino spot **Bad Saint** (badsaintdc.com; entrées \$16–\$40), in Columbia Heights, lives up to the hype, as does **Maydan** (maydandc.com; entrées \$12–\$48), in Cardozo. Bring a group to nearby **Thip Khao** (thipkhao.com; entrées \$12–\$24), where Laotian dishes are served family-style. For picnic provisions, head to Shaw and stop at both **Green Almond Pantry** (greenalmondpantry.com; entrées \$8–\$13) and **Seylou Bakery** (seylou.com). Try the *pupusas* at **Don Juan** (donjuanrestaurantdc.com), in Mount Pleasant, then walk a mile south to Adams Morgan and compare them with those at **El Tamarindo** (eltamarindodc.com). **Vace Italian Deli** (vaceitaliandeli.com), in Cleveland Park, sells slices, subs, and other Italian delights, while Park View "Jew-ish" deli **Call Your Mother** (callyourmotherdeli.com) has inventive bagels and smoked fish even Bubbe would approve.

What to Do

The museums on the Mall are a must, especially the poignant **National Museum of African American History & Culture** (nmaahc.si.edu). To see the presidential memorials, rent a Citibike and go after dark, when they're empty and lit up against the sky. Other highlights include **Artechouse** (dc.artechouse.com), a gallery/light show hybrid near the Wharf; the **Phillips Collection** (phillipscollection.org), in Dupont Circle; and the Smithsonian's **Anacostia Community Museum** (anacostia.si.edu), in Anacostia, which reopens this fall. Try to catch a show at the **9:30 Club** (930.com), near the U Street Corridor. Once the heart of D.C. hard-core and go-go, it remains one of the best—and most iconic—venues in the country.

THE LAND OF



MYTHICAL CREATURES

On a journey to a far-flung corner of Zambia, HORATIO CLARE goes in search of the shoebill—an enormous, enigmatic bird that has become a symbol of the fight to protect Africa's least-known and most vulnerable ecosystems.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX CRÉTEY SYSTEMANS



Sunset in South Luangwa National Park. Opposite: A shoebill takes flight over the Bangweulu Wetlands.

“WE’LL NEED TO DO SOME WADING IN ORDER TO LOCATE THE SHOEBILL,”

read the e-mail. The sender, a naturalist named Rod Tether who was to be my guide in Zambia, added: “You may want to bring along a pair of shoes that you don’t mind getting wet.”

Bangweulu is a miraculous, 2,300-square-mile expanse of marsh in northern Zambia. It is also one of the last homes of the iconic, elusive shoebill—a prehistoric-looking bird with an eight-foot wingspan found only in the remotest swamps of Africa. Few people have seen one. Rod has, though.

Having traveled with Rod on other adventures—a hippo bit our canoe in half on an earlier trip in western Zambia—I suspected that “some wading” would involve us plunging up to our necks through swamps like the ghosts of explorers David Livingstone and Henry Morton Stanley.

The reality wasn’t far off. In Bangweulu, you seem to paddle through the sky, so brightly are its endless blues reflected in the water. We crossed lily ponds that would have made an Impressionist painter swoon, their white, mauve, and blue flowers floating amid clumps of phragmites and papyrus. As we waded, dragging our canoes, using distant trees as wayfinders and jumping between broken dikes in pursuit of a mysterious beast, it felt as if we were on a quest from an antique time.



I had come to Zambia, a landlocked country in the heart of southern Africa, to experience two very different ecosystems—and two equally distinct models of conservation. We began in Big Five territory, at South Luangwa National Park, where the family-run Shenton Safaris operates two long-established camps. One of the oldest national parks in Zambia, South Luangwa is an outstanding model of the traditional relationship between tourism, community, and wildlife.

We then flew to the remote world of Bangweulu, where African Parks—a donor-led conservation NGO working in some of the continent’s most vulnerable, inaccessible places—has opened a way for visitors to experience these extraordinary wetlands. On the butterfly-shaped map of Zambia this is not a huge distance, essentially just up a vein in the right wing. But the adventure I had in these two very different ecosystems tells a deeper story about how humans and wildlife might find a way to share the planet—to the benefit of all.

WE SET OUT ON OUR first game drive in South Luangwa just as the sun began to set. Rod sat behind me as we entered the reserve, following the beam of the spotlight on

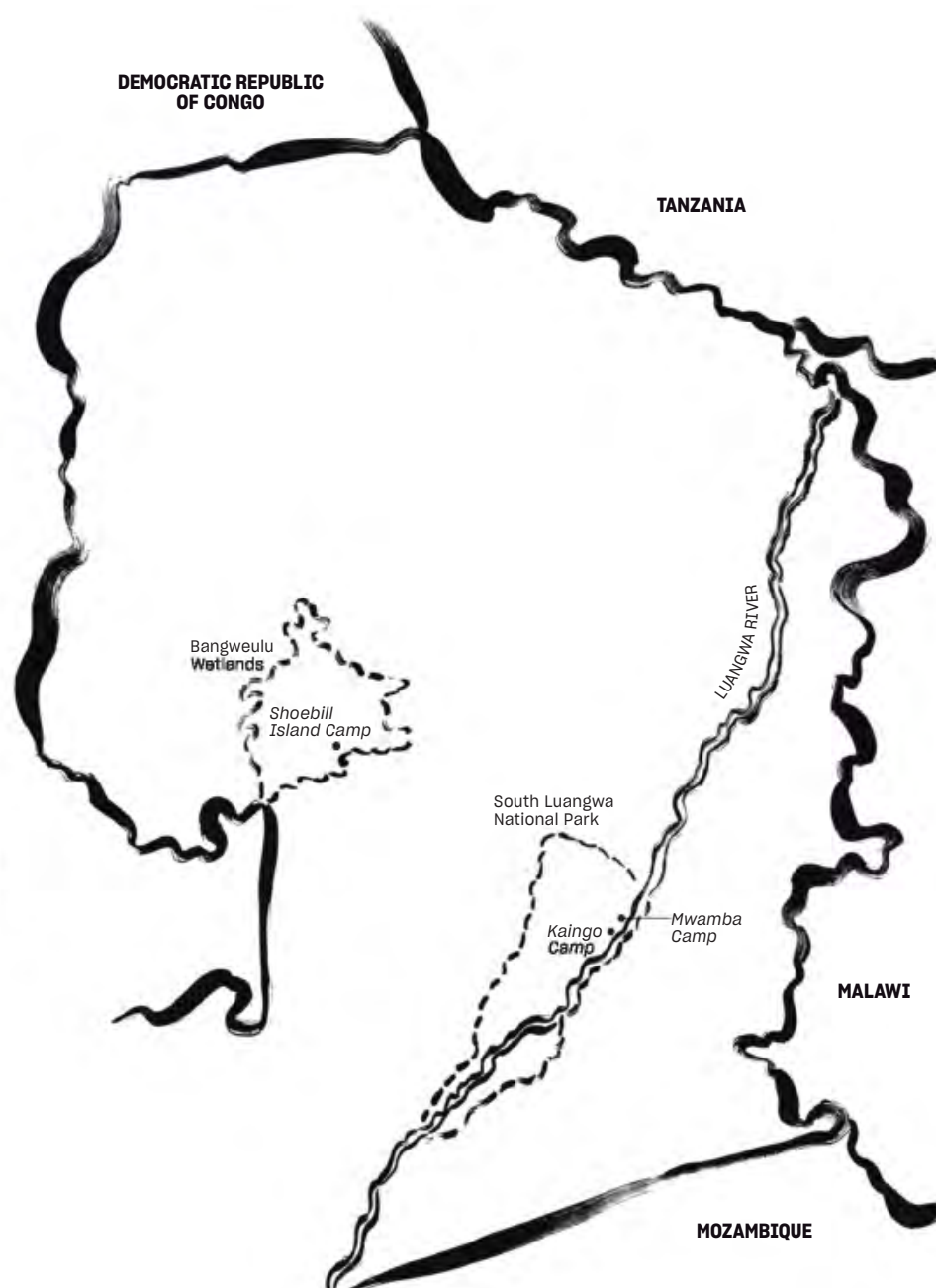


ILLUSTRATION BY MAY PARSEY

► From top: A herd of red lechwe in the Bangweulu Wetlands; the Numbu Star Bed at Mwamba Bush Camp, in South Luangwa National Park.

our vehicle as it traversed the bush in the fast-falling night, the maraca sound of the cicadas and the sweet dusty smell of the river valley drifting in through the windows.

"Puku—and leopard!" Rod cried, as the spotlight jumped. Pukus are small antelope, and we had inadvertently saved one from a violent end. Just 10 yards away, its head down and its shoulders rolling, was a huge leopard, orange-gold in the light.

"I know this leopard," said Sylvester Mbaama, our driver and local guide. "He has a big territory." A gentle Zambian with eyes as quick as Rod's, Sylvester possessed a deep knowledge, updated daily, of the lives of the creatures we encountered.



▲ A leopard hiding from a group of lionesses in South Luangwa National Park.



"Are there many leopards here?"

"Many! This is perfect habitat for them."

South Luangwa's roots go back to 1949, when Nfetsu, the chief of the region's Kunda people, created a private game reserve at the urging of the British conservationist Norman Carr. Carr went on to invent the model that many safari companies now follow, seeking to empower local people through employment and training, development, and tourism designed to promote conservation. All around us was evidence of his legacy: an environment so rich with life that we encountered a bird or beast at every twist in the track.

Our home in South Luangwa was Mwamba Camp, a cluster of thatch-and-



◀ The dining area at Shoebill Island Camp, an African Parks-run lodge in the Bangweulu Wetlands.

IT FELT LIKE I WAS ENTERING A DRAMA IN WHICH HUMANS HAD DECENT PARTS, BUT NOT NECESSARILY LEAD ROLES.

bamboo huts on the banks of the Mwamba River, which runs along the park's eastern edge. Each of the four guest chalets is open to the sky, allowing night breezes to take the place of air-conditioning. From my bed I stared upward, through a mosquito net and a layer of mesh, to branches seemingly hung with stars. The whistling of tree frogs and the whooping of hyenas made up the soundscape until dawn, when doves and coucals took over and I was summoned to breakfast.

In the camp's open dining area, Craig and Lindy Reiche, Mwamba's young managers, doled out coffee and muffins and told tales of their neighbors.

"We have an elephant who loves the gardenia by our hut," Craig said.

"He makes so much noise with his chewing," Lindy added with a laugh.

It felt like I was entering a drama in which humans had decent parts, but not necessarily leading roles. The Reiches' employers, Derek and Juliet Shenton, are two important

characters. Derek founded Shenton Safaris back in 1992 with the goal of bringing guests as close to nature as possible. He grew up in Zambia. "I was farming with my father when I came here," he said. "Twenty-six years later, I'm still around." Derek is passionate about the power of tourism—and community involvement—to protect wildlife. "Local children must see the park and be amazed by it—because protecting it is going to be up to them."

Because South Luangwa is popular with visitors, it is one of the few parks in Zambia that pays its way. Park fees generate \$3.5 million for the government each year. "Not much of that comes back into the park," Derek observed. But Shenton Safaris gives a percentage of its profits to local schools. "We also fund park rangers and work to mitigate conflict between villagers and elephants." Humans and animals have found an easy cohabitation—a testament to Carr's vision.



▶ A juvenile elephant, as seen on a walking safari in South Luangwa National Park.



“LET’S SEE WHAT the morning has for us!” said Sylvester, as we rolled into the bush after breakfast. The neighbors were everywhere. Flocks of Lilian’s lovebirds, little green parrots with red-and-orange heads, whirred through the bushes like jeweled sparks. Six lionesses dozed under an ebony tree. In the branches skulked a large and angry leopard whose impala kill the lionesses had eaten.

“This is Lumabe,” said Sylvester. “He had to be darted twice when he outgrew his collars, so he doesn’t like us.”

Lumabe rumbled at us disparagingly. I had never been growled at by a leopard before, and found the experience unsettling.

We went down to the river, where Rod pointed out pied and malachite kingfishers, bee-eaters and a martial eagle: “The lion of the sky!” he exclaimed.

▲
*Fishermen plying
the fertile swamps
of Bangweulu.*



On the banks of the Luangwa the words of the poet Langston Hughes came to me. “I’ve known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins....” The river is a world in ripeness, never still, never silent. As we stood watching, half a dozen elephants, led by a matriarch, came down to drink, standing on their reflections and keeping their calves close. The water was silvery brown, low and indolent, the bends humped with pods of hippopotamuses like large blue slugs. Nearby were crocodiles as long as cars, waiting months for a meal.

The Shentons have built blinds on the riverbanks and near the watering holes from which guests can watch wildlife unnoticed. One is beside the Luangwa, where later that afternoon, as night fell, we witnessed a sudden eruption of panic along the bank. Impalas fled, pursued by lions. Close by there was a cry and a thump; from behind

a bush came a single lioness, a young impala limp in her jaws. She hurried into cover and tore into her victim, bolting down the entrails, her face masked in blood.

The urgency with which she ate and the wary way she kept raising her head spoke of the layered ferocity of life in the bush, of the daily campaign against hunger. As we drove back to camp, Saturn and Jupiter glittered low in the sky, eternal witnesses to all of Earth’s tiny lives. How infinitesimal existence is, and how infinite in its moments, I thought, as the moon rose above us in a lopsided grin.

►
*A male lion, as seen
on a nighttime drive
in South Luangwa
National Park.*

◀
In the Bangweulu Wetlands, fishing communities live cheek-by-jowl with endangered species.

WE LEFT SOUTH LUANGWA'S stories to their unfolding and took a tiny plane toward the Bangweulu Wetlands. Rod pointed out the watershed that divides the Zambezi river basin (which drains into the Indian Ocean) from the headwaters of the mighty Congo (which flows into the Atlantic). As we circled the airstrip, I gazed down on a sea of green reeds, broken by the occasional sheen of open water. The only road runs out at the airfield; beyond lie hundreds of miles of water and wilderness.

As we stepped out of the plane, grasshoppers leaped away from our feet in clicking shoals. The sky felt limitless, full of light and a feeling of joyful freedom. We were met by Jackson Ng'andwe, a solemn guide for African Parks, which today manages these wetlands in partnership with the 50,000 people who live here. Jackson conducted us to a flat-bottomed punt in which two boatmen poled us through ditches, then channels, then lagoons, on our way to Shoebill Island Camp. We scraped through tiny channels, the punt tunneling through reeds. Rod was in ornithological nirvana. Herons, stilts, snipes, ibis, storks, cranes, pelicans, ducks, marsh harriers, bee-eaters, and kingfishers were all around, so close he didn't even need his binoculars.

Shoebill Island Camp stands on a rare patch of dry ground. A deck and dining area look out on a wide lagoon; behind them is a line of simple, yet comfortable tents. Paths lead away into the swamps and marshes. The sensation of space and scale gave me a feeling of euphoria, of extraordinary fortune at being as far (Continued on page 182)

Zambia, from Savanna to Wetlands

Begin with a classic safari in South Luangwa National Park, before witnessing innovative conservation techniques in the Bangweulu swamp.

Getting There

Emirates (emirates.com) flies from New York City and Los Angeles to Lusaka, the Zambian capital, with a stop in Dubai. From Lusaka's Kenneth Kaunda International Airport, **Proflight Zambia** (proflight-zambia.com) flies to South Luangwa's Mfuwe Airport in just over an hour. From there, it's a short drive to South Luangwa National Park. To Shoebill Island Camp, in the Bangweulu Wetlands, hour-long chartered flights are available from Mfuwe Airport. Transfer to and from the camp is by canoe and takes 40 minutes.

Where to Stay

Shenton Safaris (shenton-safaris.com) offers Kaingo Camp, which has six chalets on the Luangwa River (chalets from \$880 per person), and Mwamba Camp, which has four chalets on the Mwamba River (chalets from \$830 per person). Access to a range of blinds makes this safari company especially popular with photographers.

In Bangweulu, **Shoebill Island Camp** (shoebillislandcamp.com; tents from \$650 per person) has four large, walk-in safari tents with en suite bathrooms and private decks. There's also a spacious restaurant with a fireplace and lovely views.

Tour Operator

This trip was planned and led by Rod Tether of **Natural High Safaris** (naturalhigh-safaris.com; seven nights from \$7,385 per person, all-inclusive). The Uganda-born naturalist has been leading safaris since he was 17. — H.C.





Spirit in the Sky

Bhutan has long drawn travelers seeking to strengthen their mind-body connection. So it's only natural that the Himalayan mountain kingdom now has its first dedicated wellness retreat—offering traditional Eastern therapies, customized treatment plans, and a healthy dose of the country's legendary happiness. **BY JEN MURPHY PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER WISE**



Clockwise from top: At Bhutan Spirit Sanctuary, upstairs rooms have balconies overlooking forested hillsides; dishes at the property's organic restaurant showcase produce from local farms; the lower-level spa includes six treatment rooms and a heated indoor pool; most members of the 75-person staff are Bhutanese. Opposite: The 24-room lodge is located in the pine-tree-dotted Neyphu Valley.

THE INDOOR POOL at Bhutan Spirit Sanctuary was never intended to be a place for meditation. But I couldn't help being lulled into a contemplative state as I sat on its edge, pondering the way the floor-to-ceiling windows perfectly framed the emerald Neyphu Valley and the bright blue skies beyond.

My reverie was interrupted by the soft ringing of a gong. I turned to find my dedicated well-being guide, Dr. Thinley Om, standing at the door. I followed her down a long hall lined with laboratory-like jars of herbs and into an austere treatment room that smelled faintly of sage. She instructed me to hang up my robe and lie facedown. The scent became stronger as she lit small sticks of wild mugwort and placed them inside the tiny bamboo boxes along my back. This traditional Chinese medicine treatment, known as moxibustion, uses herbs and heat to help the body's chi, or life force, flow freely. Mine, according to Dr. Om, was very congested.

Few people make the journey to Bhutan just so they can unblock their chi. In fact, I partly blamed the nearly 16-hour flight from New York for jamming mine up in the first place. But the hotel's Dutch owner, Louk Lennaerts, who has spent much of his career in Vietnam developing such health-focused all-inclusives as Fusion Maia Da Nang, believes this Himalayan kingdom is primed to become the next wellness mecca. Not only does Bhutan—whose ancient name, Mejong, means Land of Medicinal Plants—have that rare combination of intense natural beauty and rich cultural heritage that draws spiritual seekers from all over the world; its branding is also perfectly aligned with the current mania for self-improvement.

Bhutan's Gross National Happiness Index—conceived by King Jigme Singye Wangchuck in 1998 as an alternative to GDP—has created a global perception of Bhutan as a mystical, trouble-free paradise in a world beset by cynicism, anxiety, and the 24-hour news cycle. And unlike in Bali and Thailand, the government of Bhutan embraced a low-volume tourism model when the country opened to the outside world in 1974—decades before the sustainable-travel movement gained mainstream appeal.

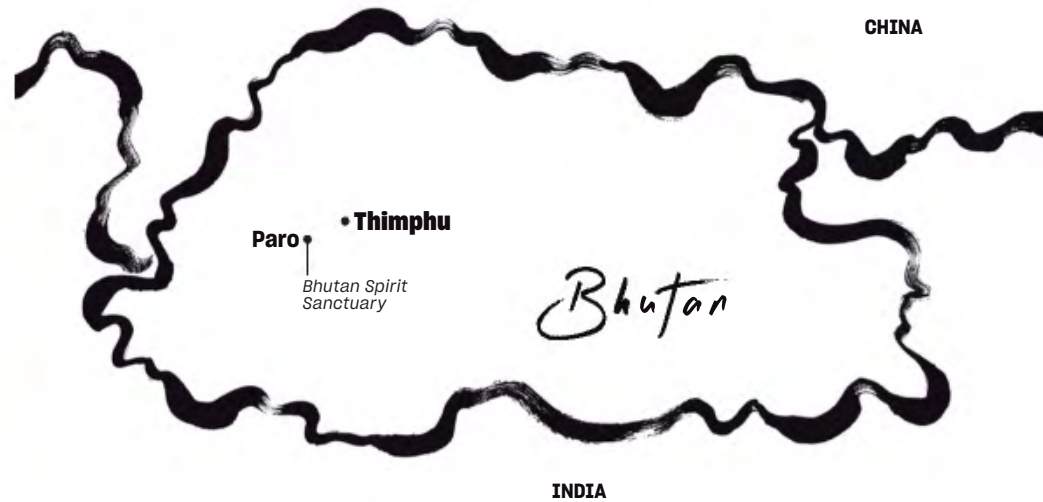
In Bhutan, well-heeled travelers have their pick of five-star lodges from wellness-travel leaders like Aman, COMO, and, since late last year, Six Senses. All three of these brands encourage guests to visit multiple high-end lodges over the course of one trip as part of the experience. Bhutan Spirit Sanctuary takes a different approach, however, asking guests to stay put. The recommended minimum stay is five nights: enough time for visitors to learn about the local culture and get immersed in their surroundings. One day, you might hike to a monastery to join student monks for a morning meditation. Another, you might trek to the nearby hills to forage ingredients for treatments at the spa.



"You can see a country from a car, but you don't connect with it," Lennaerts told me over a pot of ginger tea on the terrace overlooking the rolling valley. "To personally connect with a place, you need to also have an inward journey." He hopes a holistic experience that includes yoga, meditation, and spa treatments, as well as meals and activities, will give guests everything they could desire.

From the moment I arrived at Bhutan Spirit Sanctuary's large red gates, I could tell that it was different. Many lodges incorporate a design element or two from traditional Bhutanese architecture—flared roofs, intricately carved window frames—but Bhutan Spirit Sanctuary takes all of its inspiration from the *dzongs* (fortresses) found throughout the kingdom. Lennaerts personally greeted me in a courtyard ringed by wood-beamed porticoes and traditional prayer wheels. I followed him around a meditation maze, then across a small wooden bridge where welcoming staff stood dressed in the traditional robelike *gho* or *kira*. Doors opened to what Lennaerts called the Transformation Room. "Enter and leave your stress," he ordered as he handed me a match to light a butter lamp set on a small altar in front of a mural of the Buddhist Wheel of Life.

At check-in, I selected local bath products (sandalwood soap, a bergamot bath bomb) before being escorted to my white-walled quarters. Even the smallest of the 24 rooms spans 580 square feet, and that doesn't include their generous private outdoor spaces with monastery views.



From far left: The year-old lodge was designed to look like a traditional fortress; guests are invited to perform a welcome ritual at the beginning of their stay.

The décor was simple: a few glazed vases that had been thrown in the on-site pottery studio; an obligatory photo of Bhutan's beloved king and queen; and a copy of *The Restful Mind*, a Buddhist guide to quieting your thoughts, which Dr. Om instructed me to dip into each night before bed.

I could have spent the entire time in the spa, which offers daily yoga and meditation sessions, as well as therapies that include not only moxibustion but also *kunye*, or Tibetan massage, and *numtsu*, or hot-oil compression. But there is also a broader itinerary of activities, like hiking excursions to the iconic Tiger's Nest and Drakarpo Kora, a hilly Buddhist site in Paro that pilgrims trek around 108 times (I barely completed two circuits). Guests can also try pottery classes led by Sanctuary's resident art teacher, Lhatso, and experience archery with activities guide Dechen Dorji.

At Dr. Om's recommendation, I swapped my nightly glass of red wine for *Terminalia chebula*, a regional tea that is said to remedy defective energies. Everything I ate was selected by Parash Chhetri, the Bhutanese head chef, who customized nightly menus that featured dishes like risotto with green peas and mint and pumpkin soup scented with Chinese five-spice.

By the end of my stay Dr. Om had stopped asking about my condition. I could attribute my reflowing chi to the daily massages or restful sleep, but I think staying in a place where I was so thoroughly looked after, by a team that felt like a family, is what really allowed me to relax. +

How to Plan a Retreat in Bhutan

What you need to know before booking a trip to the Himalayan kingdom.

Getting There

Fly to a regional hub such as Singapore, Bangkok, or New Delhi (where a transit visa may be required) before connecting to a Bhutanese carrier. **Drukair Royal Bhutan Airlines** (drukair.com) and **Bhutan Airlines** (bhutanairlines.bt) both offer daily service into Paro, where Bhutan's only international airport is located.

Where to Stay

Bhutan Spirit Sanctuary (bhutanspirit-sanctuary.com; doubles from \$650, all-inclusive), near Paro, is the country's first dedicated wellness resort. Treatments are inspired by Buddhist teachings and Eastern therapies and are supplemented with cultural activities.

Visas & Fees

Visitors to Bhutan must go through a government-licensed tour operator to secure the \$40 visa needed to enter the country. They must also pay a tariff of \$200–\$250 per day, depending on the season.

Tour Operator

Mei Zhang, a member of T+L's A-List of editor-approved travel advisors, can handle your visas and daily tariffs. Her company, **WildChina**, can also organize comprehensive Bhutan itineraries that include sightseeing in the capital of Thimphu, hiking excursions to the Tiger's Nest Monastery, and bird-watching in the Gangtey Valley. wildchina.com; five-day trips from \$2,210 per person.



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(Washington, D.C., continued from page 167)

example of D.C.'s new culinary eclecticism is Maydan, the two-year-old restaurant in Cardozo known for its enormous firepit, where cooks maneuver whole chickens and tenderloins just inches from the flames. Its menu offers a culinary tour of the Caucasus, North Africa, and the Middle East, with stops in Georgia, Morocco, Lebanon, and Turkey. The national food press has raved about Maydan, whose cuisine reflects the twisty translations of a dish from place to place through condiments—seven, to be exact, from garlicky *toum* to spicy *harissa*, all available à la carte and, paired with the grilled meats and veggies, the foundation for infinite flavor combinations. But even though Maydan has become a can't-miss destination for foodies from out of town, at heart it is, like Bad Saint, a place for the community. “We set out to make this a neighborhood restaurant, for the young families in the area,” Gerald Addison, a chef at Maydan and a D.C. native, told me.

I wanted to get a taste of the old places, too, so I went to Vace, a 43-year-old Italian market in Cleveland Park with formidable Italian grandmothers behind the

register and \$2 pizza slices so good you'll sacrifice the roof of your mouth to eat them hot from the oven. At Don Juan, Mount Pleasant's favorite *pupusería* since 1992, I smothered pork-and-cheese *pupusas* in slaw before scarfing them down, nearly eating the foil wrapping in my haste.

Places like Vace and Don Juan are important not just because they're delicious but also because they represent an older D.C. that's increasingly hard to find. “There used to be go-go music on the street, and places selling chicken and mumbo sauce,” recalled Addison, who moved back to his hometown in 2012. “When I tell people I grew up in D.C., they're surprised. I think they forget that some of us are from here.”

THE NATIONAL Museum of African American History & Culture, which opened its doors in 2016 after decades of organizing efforts, bears little resemblance to the limestone-white museums lining Constitution Avenue. Standing grandly off on its own on 14th Street, the bronze-colored building rises in an inverted pyramid—designed by British-African architect David Adjaye as a nod to Yoruban crowns—amid a sprawling lawn.

A freight elevator dropped me into the History Galleries, which fill three stories, each with a passageway stretching nearly a mile. The only way to get out is by walking through all three levels. The dim lights of the lowest level (“1400–1877: Slavery and Freedom”) revealed hordes of other guests. Together we shuffled from one exhibit to the next. Moments of horror were juxtaposed with

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moments of resilience, even pleasure: child-size shackles sat near hand-crafted marbles, and a wall inscribed with descriptions of enslaved people faced an exhibit on musical instruments. The sudden burst of color and music that greeted me at the top level ("1968 and Beyond: A Changing America") was all the more poignant after the 500 years of darkness below. When I exited after three hours, I stared at the other museums along the Mall, unable to reconcile the Washington so concerned with America's past with the D.C. that seemed to be struggling to keep its own from disappearing.

Oddly enough, I didn't start to hear about D.C.'s local history until I checked in to Eaton DC, a new hotel near Franklin Square that, at first glance, seemed fully concerned with the now. There were zeitgeisty touches, such as a co-working space and a bowl of crystals for guests at check-in. My room was stocked with yerba maté shots and kombucha; a plastic-wrapped tarot deck (\$15); and my very own record player, along with a small selection of vinyl.

Yet despite its trendy vibe, Eaton incorporates nods to the area's past in its décor and programming. On a tour of the hotel's art and artifacts, which guests can sign up for at the front desk, I learned how in 1830, Beverly Snow, a free black man, opened a popular oyster house on the corner of Sixth and Pennsylvania; how the architect William Sidney Pittman constructed the 12th Street YMCA, the first to allow black men, in 1912; and how in 1943 the Barnett-Aden Gallery, one of the first galleries to show African-American art in the U.S., debuted near the Y.

The next morning, I struck up a conversation with Ellery Queen, a barista at Eaton's coffee shop, who grew up between the Wharf and the Navy Yard. When I asked her how she felt about the developments in

Southwest D.C., she didn't hesitate. "They're tearing down people's childhoods," she told me. "My family used to go to the wharf all the time. We would buy a cheap bag of crabs from one of the restaurants and just sit and eat them by the water. None of those restaurants exist anymore." Queen is planning on moving to Florida with her two children; D.C. has become too expensive for her. "It's not that change is bad," she said. "But they didn't change with us in mind."

ON MY LAST day in town, I took the Metro across the Anacostia River. For just a moment, I caught a glimmer of what D.C. might have looked like a couple of generations ago, when it was one of the few places where middle-class African Americans could grow their businesses and raise their families. The Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum, an institution with the mission of preserving African-American history through the lens of the Anacostia community, was presenting a free screening of a new documentary called *What Happened 2 Chocolate City*. After the credits rolled, filmmaker Mignotae Kebede told us that she'd moved to D.C. from Los Angeles because she'd grown up listening to her parents tell their friends stories about Chocolate City. She made the film after arriving to discover that that version of D.C. was nowhere to be found.

Kebede's final words were "Talk to your neighbor." She repeated those words when I spoke with her later, adding, "If you don't talk to the person who's been on your block for decades, you'll never know the history of where you're living." "Talk to your neighbor" rang in my head on my flight home. It was a refrain I'd heard all week—sometimes as an admonishment, sometimes as a goal, always as a way of building a life in this ever-changing city. ✚



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(Zambia, continued from page 175)

away from the familiar world as it is possible to be. We were the first guests. I envy all who come after us.

"This is one of the last wild places left where humans and animals live together," Rod said. "I knew you'd love it." I did love Bangweulu, utterly, from the first moment. I loved the meditative peace of the place, the state of primordial simplicity it put me in. I loved the volleys of birds that busy the air and the outlines of the fishermen punting their canoes. From across the reedbeds, I caught the cries of waterfowl and the distant voices of fishermen, women, and children (many of whom, I was told, have never seen a motorized vehicle).

"Amazing, isn't it?" said Stuart Slabbert, the commercial development manager for African Parks, who had flown from South Africa to welcome us. Stuart is a soft-spoken evangelist for the organization, which uses donor funds to resuscitate failing or abandoned wildlife parks throughout the continent. It works like this: African Parks signs an agreement

with a government to take on management of a park for 20 to 30 years. Where states are weak, African Parks effectively takes on the role of a regional government, establishing security, managing the local economy, promoting education and health care, and working with the community to minimize human-animal conflict. Luangwa is the best functioning example of the old model, a state-controlled park that benefits from engaged private partners; African Parks, a privately funded organization that manages reserves on behalf of state governments, represents a complete inversion of that structure—and a possible paradigm for the future of conservation.

Almost 26 million acres in Africa, from Mozambique to Benin, now fall under the organization's control. It has had some huge successes. Akagera National Park in Rwanda has been entirely transformed since 2010, when African Parks took over management, improving security and reintroducing key species. The park has since experienced a 150 percent increase in visitors. Malawi's Majete Wildlife Reserve was once devoid of wildlife; now there are lions, leopards, elephants, and rhinos. In 2017, the reserve generated more than half a million dollars in tourist revenue. African Parks is responsible for similar triumphs in Chad—where it has opened schools for 1,500 children—the Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic.

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I asked why African Parks had chosen Bangweulu. "We wanted an example of every biome," Stuart said. When they took over 10 years ago, fish stocks were in crisis, and the population of black lechwe, a type of cream-and-black antelope endemic to Bangweulu, was tumbling. "We instituted a fishing ban during the spawning season, from December to March," Stuart explained. "We protected the lechwe, guarded the shoebill nests, and started training people to do commercial bee-keeping. The fish stocks are recovering, and lechwe are up to 50,000 animals."

The lechwe graze in the dry areas and buck through the water in surging parties. "It sounds like it's raining all night," Stuart said. "But it's lechwe. You'll see them jumping at sunrise."

FOR THE REST OF THE DAY we explored the area around the lodge, readying ourselves for our quest for the shoebill the next day. From the waving tips of the tall phragmites, which are pale bronze reeds, tubed, and feathered like bamboo, to the flicking hops of tiny frogs, the wetlands are a world of profuse motion and color, the waters constantly shining and pulsing.

This is not an easy place to live. We visited a family encamped in huts on a small area of dry ground. They had almost nothing. When I asked about the highlights of their year, the mother immediately said March, when the fishing ban ends. The months when they cannot fish are grindingly hard. But with all the evidence pointing to the fact that, without a ban, the stocks would collapse entirely, African Parks has taken a tough line: the greatest good for the greatest number, in the name of long-term sustainability.

As we headed back to the camp, four wattled cranes flew over, towing the evening toward sunset. Women

and children stepped home along the dikes. I found it moving just to be there, as if we had found the shifting green heart of the continent. When night fell, the stars were shockingly bright, the Milky Way a vast arch in clouds of light above us. Lechwe surged through the water as Stuart had predicted, and toward dawn the voices of fishermen gave way to cockerels crowing.

After breakfast, we set out to find the shoebill. Standing up to five feet tall, with ungainly long legs and a comically enormous bill, these birds look like fantasy creatures from a children's poem. The search would require an hour of paddling and a 2½-hour walk, Jackson informed us. Through reed tunnels and channels we punted, along broken dikes we jumped, through streams and pools we waded, up to our thighs in swamp.

"Watch out for leeches," Rod said.

"Any crocodiles?"

"Not really."

The sense of life in abundance was thrilling; the vast scale of the sky and the water were humbling. Here were currents, channels, and limpid ponds, an entire universe gleaming like a new day.

"I came here as a baby," Jackson said. "My father was a fisherman. He sent me and four brothers to school. When the last boy finished, the big man died. His work was done."

Jackson led us on. Fifteen minutes later he stood up suddenly, wobbling in the canoe.

"Binoculars!"

I passed them.

"Yes!" he cried. "Shoebill!"

And there was the tall hunched figure, the bird with the dinosaur face. We were exhilarated, as if we had encountered an alien regent in an unearthly kingdom.

The shoebill cocked its huge crested head and regarded us briefly, then stepped into the wind and climbed slowly into the air. ✚



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YOUR BEST SHOT

“FOR OUR FIFTH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY, my husband and I went on a trip to the Amalfi Coast. One of the highlights was a boat tour around Capri. I was most excited to take a photo from within this sea cave. We had to wait our turn to enter, and once inside, we only had about a minute. When it was finally our turn, I snapped away while playing with my camera’s settings. Later I looked over my photos and discovered I’d gotten a shot that highlighted the rock formations and the coastal scenery in the distance.”

— **READER MONICA AMARIZ CUELLO ON HER PHOTOGRAPH, SHOT WITH A NIKON D5600, SEPTEMBER 2017**

Monica Amariz Cuello was an entrant in our ongoing Photo of the Day contest. Submit your best shots at travelandleisure.com/photos/photo-of-the-day for the chance to be featured on this page in a future issue.



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